

DIVINE REVELATION

THE ONLY TEST OF

SOUND DOCTRINE:

O R,

A FURTHER REFORMATION

WANTED IN

THE REFORMED CHURCHES.

BEING AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE,

That the DOCTRINE of the TRINITY, as commonly held and taught, is not revealed in the HOLY SCRIPTURES; and consequently is no ARTICLE of the CHRISTIAN FAITH.

By R. ELLIOT, A. B. *R*

FORMERLY OF BENNET-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

Search the Scriptures,—for they are they that testify of me.
JOHN v. 39.

These are written, that ye might believe that JESUS is the CHRIST, the SON of GOD, and that believing ye might have life through his Name. JOHN xx. 31.

There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim. ii. 5.

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MDCC LXXIII.

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THE ONLY TEST OF

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O R,

A FURTHER REFORMATION

WANTED IN

THE REFORMED CHURCHES.

LET THEM FIRST TO PROVE,



That the Doctrine of the Trinity, as commonly held and taught, is not in the Holy Scriptures; and consequently is no Article of the Christian Faith.

By R. ELLIOT, A.B.

Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.

Search the Scriptures;—for they are they that will of us.
John 7: 17.
There are written, that he might believe that Jesus is the
Christ, the Son of God, and that believing he might
have life through his Name. John xx. 31.
There is one God, and one Mediator between God and
Men, the Man Christ Jesus: 1 Tim. ii. 5.

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No. 14, at St. Martin's Church.

MDCCLXXXII.

P R E F A C E
TO THE
UNPREJUDICED, CANDID,
AND
CHRISTIAN READER.

WE have been told by a very celebrated author, that "Several people, out of fear of giving into *Trisbeism*, have become *Sabellians*; and several others, to avoid *Sabellianism*, have commenced *Trisbeists*; so delicate and subtile is the medium:" he adds, "Dr. *South* is judged to have run into *Sabellianism* by a too rigorous asserting the unity of a Godhead; and Dr. *Sherlock* into *Trisbeism*, by a too absolute maintaining the Trinity*."

If these learned divines so widely differed in their sentiments on the subject of the Trinity, and have even been charged by some with

* Chamber's Dictionary.

Having fallen into very opposite and dangerous errors; it will perhaps be matter of surprize to many, that a person of my slender abilities should attempt to write upon this subject: indeed, I can truly say, it was not of choice, but of necessity, that I engaged in a work of this nature; for it is well known to many what a breach hath been lately made in our Society at *Cannon-Street*, occasioned by our differences relating to the TRINITY; on which account many of our brethren have not only left us, but have even charged us openly with having denied some of the fundamental articles of the christian faith: but as we believe the charge to be groundless, and that we are as free from the ARIAN or SABELLIAN *heresy*, as any of our brethren who have departed from us; we judged it necessary, to attempt at least, to clear ourselves from the charge of so great an evil.

“THE ARIANS owned Christ to be God, yet maintained him inferior to the Father, even as to his Deity; and his essence to be different from that of the Father: also that the Holy Ghost was not God, but a creature of the Son. They owned that the Son was the Word, but denied that Word to have been eternal. They likewise held that Christ had nothing of man in him, but flesh; with which the Word was joined, which supplied the rest”.

* Chambers's Dictionary.

SABEL-

P R E F A C E,

"SABELLIANS reduced the whole Trinity to the one person of the Father; making the Word and the Holy Spirit to be only virtues, emanations, or functions thereof. *Sabellius* taught that he, who in heaven is the Father of all things, descended into the virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a Son; and, that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the apostles in tongues of fire; and was then denominated the Holy Ghost*."

BUT I trust it hath been plainly shewn, that our sentiments widely differ from theirs; and I hope it will appear with satisfaction to the unprejudiced reader, that we are not justly chargeable with either of these errors.

SHOULD it be said, that we hold some things which they also held and taught, and therefore we are chargeable with their errors; I answer, this by no means follows, nor is the inference just; unless it can be proved that the sentiment which we may hold in common with them, is itself an error.

Is it right or reasonable to charge a person with holding another's error, merely because in some points he may happen to agree with him? By this way of reasoning, the general body of *Protestants* may be justly charged with the errors of *Rome*, because in some points of doctrine they

* *Chambers's Dictionary*, agree

agree with them, especially in that of the Trinity.

THOUGH what I have ventured to propose be agreeable to the sacred records, as I firmly believe it is, yet I do not expect that it will meet with a favorable reception from the generality of christian professors; for prejudice, indolence, and the implicit regard that many pay to tradition and their favorite teachers, are as so many bars and difficulties in their way, which very few will attempt to remove, much less be able to surmount and overcome. The same evil seems to prevail in our day, which a writer of the last century informs us was common in his: "Few, says he, do cleave to the holy scriptures; many do rest in *scholastic* and senseless sounds; and most men do hang their faith upon their *Rabbi's* sleeves."

SOME, perhaps, will tell us, that the doctrine of the Trinity hath been received as it is now held by the most godly men, and eminent divines; and even by the church in general for above a thousand years past: and *therefore it is true*: to which I answer,

1. THESE good men were fallible men, and therefore might be mistaken, as many have been.
2. THEY themselves widely differ in their explanations of the doctrine.
3. SOME of the most eminent divines of our own time do essentially differ from the best divines of the last century, on the article of the Trinity.

THE grand doctrines which the *martyrs* contended and died for, were quite different from this; viz. That of *justification by faith only*; and
that

that Christ alone, and not the Pope of *Rome*, was head of the church, and the Lord of men's consciences: nor had that doctrine, for which they were generally tried and condemned, any immediate respect to the Trinity, but to the popish doctrine of the *ma's*. Neither is it any certain proof of its divine original, that it hath been generally received by the reformed churches, unless it can be made appear that it is revealed in the holy scripture: rather, if it be not the plain doctrine of the bible, it seems, as is most probable, that the Protestants received it from the Papists without due examination, or at least from the *Nicene* fathers, when great darkness and confusion seems to have overspread the christian church. The mystery of iniquity began to work even in *Paul's* time, and how much more in the space of two or three hundred years after his death?

BUT if we make the writings of those fathers a test of orthodoxy, the scriptures are no longer to be considered as a *plain* divine revelation, and the only rule of our faith.

WE are told that the *Jewish* church, after the days of *Solomon*, offered sacrifice and burnt incense in high places, but they had no divine warrant for it; and though attempts were repeatedly made to purge the church of that innovation; yet it continued among them for more than two hundred years: besides, if this argument, drawn from antiquity, and the practice of some good men, and of the church in general, be admitted as

cer-

certain and conclusive; by the same rule we may, I think, prove that episcopal discipline; infant baptism; and even *Polygamy* itself is of divine original; because many good men were permitted before the gospel dispensation to live and die in the practice of it; *but from the beginning it was not so.*

FURTHER; it will probably be said by some, That I myself have preached and written in defence of the Trinity, as commonly held, and as set forth in the *Albanian* creed. What then? "Why we will bring your own writings against you." This is a strange objection; nor should I have mentioned it, had I not found some people weak enough to urge it.

PRAY, what are my writings more than any other man's? I allow no human writings to be a standard of truth, much less my own. At the time of my writing those sermons, I declared what I then believed; and what I now see to be wrong in them, I retract: and if I live to publish another edition, they shall be corrected. Every body knows it is no uncommon thing for very great writers to see something amiss in their publications, and in a *second*, or *third* edition they correct it; which is a proof, not of lightness and inconstancy, but of uprightness and honesty. And if I shall hereafter discover that what I have now written be not according to the truth of God's word, I purpose, through grace, and hope I shall

not

not be ashamed to own my mistake, and retract it. No man is infallible.

OTHERS, perhaps, will say, "But you have changed your faith:" Not in the least; for where the foundation of hope towards God remains the same, and the influences of that hope are the same in the life and conversation, the *faith* of such a one is not changed at all. If it is possible for a man to grow in grace, he may grow in knowledge also. *Paul* circumcised *Timothy*, but he would not also circumcise *Titus*; nay, he testified that "whosoever was circumcised, Christ should profit him nothing:" Did *Paul* therefore change his faith? By no means. If, through grace, our views of the Trinity are more rational, intelligible, and scriptural, then they were in times past; do we therefore deny the *true* doctrine of the Trinity? Certainly not.

WE conceive, indeed, both ourselves and others, to have been mistaken in the manner of apprehending and explaining that doctrine:—But should any one reject our present views of the doctrine, *merely because it is intelligible*, as some are said to have done; and are determined to keep to the common way of explaining it, *because it is mysterious and unintelligible*; this way of reasoning may very well suit with the blind and implicit faith of a Papist, but can by no means agree with the rational and enlightened faith of a *Protestant*.

Now one of my chief objections against the *Albanasian* doctrine is, that it *deifies*, and makes the *man Christ* co-essential, and co-equal with God; or else it denies that the Son of God did truly and properly, by obedience unto death, redeem mankind: if the *Albanasians* intend otherwise, as I suppose they do, then their representation of Christ's obedience and satisfaction for sin appears to me both unscriptural and unintelligible. Besides all this, the *Hutchinsonian* doctrine is further exceptionable, in that it denies Christ to be truly and properly the Son of God, and makes, as I conceive, a Trinity of self-existent Deities.

“TRITHEISTS, the antient heretics of this denomination, maintained three collateral, coordinate, and self-originated beings, making them three absolute independent principles, without any relation of Father or Son.” “And the modern *Tritheists* do very little fall short of them, for they assert, that the three persons of the Trinity are three infinite distinct minds and substances.” “This antiquated heresy made no small stir in *England* just at the conclusion of the last century, to wit, about the year 1697†.”

THE modern doctrine of the Trinity, as it is now taught and believed by many, seems to me indeed to be very wide of the truth, and even dangerous in its consequences. No appearances of zeal for the divinity of Christ will compensate for

† Blackamore's Index Hereticus, p. 75.

the dishonor that is done to his true name and person, in denying him to be the Son of the living God.

“THE most plausible and popular sentiment in opposition to the natural SONSHIP of the Redeemer, is that of his being a SON by *office*, or considered as Mediator. This notion is the easier received or allowed, as it is attended with a decent regard to the divinity of Christ, though in fact it endangers that glorious article of the faith †.”

THE same author further says, “The prevailing fond notion of its importing his *office* is a contradiction to reason and the testimony of God †.”

BEFORE I close this preface, I beg leave to put these few queries :

1. Is not JEHOVAH, the living God, incapable of suffering or undergoing any change whatever ?

2. ARE there more gods than one ?

3. Is not Christ properly and personally the Son of that one living and true God ?

4. Did not the Son of God, in a true and proper sense, fulfil the law, and lay down his life for us ?

5. Is it possible to reconcile these plain scripture truths with the doctrines commonly taught among us ; viz. That Christ is the Son of God, not by nature, but by office ; or that Christ, as

† Wallin on the Divine Sonship of Christ, p. 37, 38.

† Ibid. p. 40.

the Son of God, is himself JEHOVAH the living God?

UPON the whole, it hath been my study and endeavor, as in the sight of God, to conceive and speak of the doctrine of the Trinity in a manner worthy of God, for the glory of God and his Christ; and for the benefit and edification of them that love and fear his name. I have also diligently searched the scriptures with much earnest prayer to God for a right understanding therein; yet I desire, and hope, and pray God, that no person may receive what I have here advanced; if after a careful perusal, and comparing it with the holy scriptures, it doth not appear to be the true meaning and sense of divine revelation.

I do not indeed suppose but I may in some points be mistaken; but knowingly I have not wrested any one single text of scripture, nor misrepresented any of the authors on whose writings I have ventured to make a few remarks: if any one think otherwise, I shall be glad to be informed of it.

FROM men of captious and proud spirits, who will make a person an offender for a word, and even insult his neighbour because he happens to differ in opinion from him; I expect to be treated with that insolence and abuse which is peculiar to such characters; but from the humble, the godly, the wise, and the faithful christian, I hope to meet with compassion, candor, and argument.

LASTLY,

LASTLY, It is my earnest prayer to God, that this service may be acceptable to the saints of every christian denomination, and that it may be no occasion of strife and contention among them. If any, therefore, should receive what we have here written as the true doctrine of God's word, I beseech them not to censure nor condemn those of their brethren that cannot receive it in the same light ; for *God is not the author of confusion, but of peace.*

“ GRACE be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.”



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1682



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INTRO.

INTRODUCTION.

THERE is, I conceive, no one point in divinity more difficult to be treated of, nor less understood by christians in general, and wherein they are more unsettled and divided, than that which relates to the doctrine of the *Trinity*: yet I apprehend that the difficulty doth not so much arise from the *nature* of the subject itself, as from the *manner* in which learned men have generally treated and spoken of it: Job is said to have “darkened counsel by words without knowledge;” and it seems to me, that some of these good men, by their great learning and the art of reasoning, have, in this particular, copied after his example; for I conceive that the scripture-doctrines of *Original Sin*, of the *New Birth*, and of *Justification by Faith* in Christ, are not more plainly, nor indeed so fully revealed, as that which relates to the true knowledge of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit: But whereas the objections which have been made by the sophistry and wisdom of men against this plain scriptural truth are almost endless and without number; and the differences between divines and others who have treated of the subject are likewise great and many: It was reckoned necessary to

be a little particular and large in considering and pointing out the chief of them ; being desirous, as much as in me lay, to make the subject as clear as possible, for the benefit of christians of ordinary capacities ; on which account it was hardly possible to avoid a repetition of objections and answers, and especially of scripture texts, which, I fear, will seem to some of my readers to be somewhat tedious ; but I would rather be a little prolix than dark and obscure. I have freely made remarks on the sentiments and expressions of divers authors who have written on the subject ; pointing out the several particulars wherein I suppose them to have been mistaken ; yet I have done it no farther than what appeared to me necessary, in order to give the reader a just idea of the differences betwixt them, and wherein they seem to differ also from the sacred writers.

BUT I desire it may be particularly noticed and remembered, that however they may appear to differ among themselves, and condemn each other ; and whatever consequence may seem to follow from their various schemes and expressions ; yet I do not charge any of them with those consequences, supposing that they themselves do not see and allow them : neither do I make their differences to be at all essential, or a capital error ; rather it hath been one principal aim throughout the whole to shew, that no particular *human* explanation of the Trinity, as commonly held and taught among us, is an *essential*, or in truth any article of the christian faith : My design, therefore, hath been not to widen, but to heal the breaches of God's people ; not to break the peace of the church⁴⁴ but to reunite and make peace betwixt them.

AND

AND though I may not be so happy as to succeed herein (nor shall I succeed, unless the *Lord himself* vouchsafe to own and bless my weak endeavors) yet an attempt of this kind cannot, I suppose, be justly blamed: That there is much want of *gospel forbearance, love, and unanimity* amongst christians, occasioned by their differences in *this*, as well as in *other* points of doctrine, is notorious and well known: And although we do not hold the difference as essential, yet there are many that do, and as such are warmly contending for it, withdrawing themselves, and excluding others, from churches on that account. If therefore those fiery zealots are mistaken, as we conceive they are; it seems expedient for the churches peace and edification to point out their mistake, and to shew them their error.

FOR I FIRMLY believe, that all the essentials of the gospel necessary to salvation, may, notwithstanding these differences, be rightly held and possessed on both sides: And if so, they may all, as christians, be joined together in Christ by a living faith, and be accepted with God through him; and therefore they also may, and ought to be united in Spirit, and in visible communion one with another: Let us then receive one another as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.

THOUGH our manner of treating this subject may appear to differ from many other views of it; yet we have not advanced any *new doctrine*: for no *essential* is altered, or even affected by it. The *same Jesus*, and the *same gospel* which the *first christians*, and *Protestants* believed and taught; is equally held and maintained by us, as in years past. I

have only attempted to remove some obstacles out of the way relating to the Trinity as commonly explained, at which the weak in faith, especially, are apt to stumble; and to explain, in a more intelligible and familiar manner, that *antient* doctrine of the gospel concerning this matter; even the *mystery of God* manifested in the flesh, and of the atonement of Jesus Christ our Lord; together with the proper relations and work of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; so far as they are revealed to us in the word of truth.

Now the whole matter chiefly hinges, as I conceive, on these three particulars:

1. WHETHER it was *GOD the Father* that created the worlds, and spake to the patriarchs and prophets of old *in and by his SON*? or whether it was the *Son alone*, and not the *Father* in him, that spake and did these things? We maintain the former.

2. WHETHER the *person* of the Son of God, who was sent and came down from heaven to redeem mankind, did in a true and *proper sense* obey the law, and lay down his life for us? or, whether his sufferings, as the *Son of God*, are only to be understood in a *metaphorical* and *figurative sense*? We believe the former.

3. WHETHER the Holy Ghost is to be considered as *another person* in distinction from God the Father? or is, in a *proper sense*, the Spirit of God, and included in the person of God the Father? We believe the latter.

THESE particulars contain, I conceive, the *substance* of the whole controversy: and, if well attended to, and rightly understood, may serve as a *key* to what I have ventured to propose on the subject.

DIVINE

DIVINE REVELATION
THE ONLY TEST OF
SOUND DOCTRINE.

CHAPTER I.

Contains a specimen of the various and opposite views and opinions of some great divines and learned men on the subject of the Trinity.

THAT explanation of the scripture doctrine of the Trinity, which hath generally obtained in the christian church for above a thousand years past, *seems* to be this; viz. That in the divine nature or Godhead, which is but one, there are three divine, *co-essential*, and, in some sort, *co-equal* and *co-eternal* persons; viz. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. By a divine person, some appear to mean that which is *real* and *proper*; others, that which is *modal* and *improper*: They say, that the Father is first in order of nature, and is *unbegotten*, having received his essence and person from none;

none ; that the Son is of the Father alone, being, as to his divine Sonship or person, begotten of the Father, to whom the Father hath communicated his whole essence. That the Holy Spirit is of the same divine essence, proceeding by an act of spiration, according to some (the *Greek church*) from the Father alone ; and according to others (the *Latin church*) from the Father and Son both : The whole Godhead is also represented, not as separated, or divided into three parts, but as dwelling *equally* and *wholly in each*, and in all of the three divine persons. They asserted likewise that the names of Father, Son, and Spirit were not names of *office* or *æconomical*, but names of *nature* and *relation*, expressive of, and essential to their divine personalities. Considered as persons, they have represented them as subordinate one to another ; the Son inferior to the Father, and the Holy Spirit to them both ; they considered them, therefore, rather as *equal in nature*, than in *person*. Three divine equal persons, *unoriginated*, *self-existent*, and *independent*, they rejected as *polytheism* and *heresy*. The *Athanasian* and *Nicene creeds* do, I conceive, briefly express, or necessarily imply these sentiments ; but the following authors are more large and explicit on the subject. “ It is, saith one, the personal and incommunicable property of the Son to be *begotten* of the Father. Hence he is called *the only begotten of the Father* ; because he is begotten by him in an *eminent* and *singular* manner, such as can agree to no other ; viz. By an eternal *communication* of the divine essence, that it may subsist in a different manner ; so that he hath the *original* of his personal subsistence *from* the Father. He (the Father)

is

is the *original* of personal subsistence to the Son, by *generation*; and He, together with the Son, is the *original* of personal subsistence to the *Holy Ghost* by *spiration* *."

"Christ (saith Mr. Perkins) is called the Son of God, because he was begotten of the Father, who must be considered two ways, as he is a Son, and as he is God. As he is a Son, he is *not of himself*, but the Son of the Father begotten of him: Nevertheless, as he is God, he is of himself, neither begotten, nor proceeding; for the essence or Godhead of the Father is of itself without all beginning; but the Godhead of the Son is one and the same with the Godhead of the Father †." "Christ must be considered both in regard of his Godhead, and in regard of his person: In regard of his Godhead, he came not of any, but is of himself, as well as the Father; yet, in regard of his person, he is *from* the Father, who is a *beginning* to the rest of the persons, both in respect of order, as also in respect of the *communication* of the Godhead ‡."

"Although the Son be begotten of his Father, yet nevertheless he is, of and by himself, very God; for the Deity, which is common to all the three persons, is not begotten: but as he is a *person*, and the Son of the Father, he is *not of himself*; but *from another* §." Bishop Beveridge speaks to the same effect, thus, "I may say, in the sacred Trinity, or amongst the *divine persons*, there is *one before another*, and *one greater than another*; yet I cannot say, that in the sacred Deity, or in the *divine nature*, there is

* Wisheart's Theologia, vol. 2. page 746. † Perkins on the Creed, page 174.

‡ Ibid. p. 175.

§ Ibid. p. 14.

8 *Different Sentiments of learned Men*

one greater than another, or one before another. ||” “The essence of the Father did not beget the Son, by communicating of his *person* to him ; but the person of the Father begat the Son, by *communicating* his *essence* to him ; so that the *person* of the Son is *begotten*, not communicated ; but the *essence* of the Son is *communicated*, not begotten *.” “ The Son is of the same substance and essence with the Father ; but herein they differ, that the FATHER hath this essence *of himself*, the SON of *the Father* ; and so the person of the Father is not from the person of the Son, but from himself ; whereas the person of the Son is *not from himself*, but from the person of the Father†.” “ What ground have we from scripture to say, *the Son was begotten of the Father, or that the Father’s begetting of the Son was by COMMUNICATING his own essence to him ?* Why, *this notion* I ground upon these words, “ For as the Father hath life in himself, so “ hath he given to the Son to have life in himself,” John v. 26. *To have life in himself*, is an essential property of the divine nature ; and, therefore, wheresoever that is given or communicated, the nature itself must needs be given and communicated. Now here we see God the Father communicated this his essential property, and so his own essence, to the Son ; and by consequence, though he be a distinct person from him, yet he hath the same unbegotten essence with him ; only with this personal distinction, the Father hath this, having life in himself, not from the Son, but from himself ; whereas the Son

¶ Bp. Beveridge on the 39 Articles, page 43. * Ibid. p. 58. † Ibid. p. 59.

hath this, having life in himself, *not from himself*, but from the Father†." Another learned and zealous defender of the Trinity, according to the creed of the *Nicene* fathers, is evidently of the same sentiments: "*Supremacy of order*, saith he, consists in this; that the Father has his perfections, dominion, &c. *from none*, but the Son *from the Father*. All that the Son has is *referred up* to the Father, and not *vice versa*. This kind of supremacy is of the Father alone: and the Son's *subordination*, thus understood, is very consistent with his equality of *nature*, dominion, perfection, and glory, according to all antiquity§." "If you ask, how it (dominion) can be *supreme* in both (Father and Son) if it be original *here*, and derivative *there*? I answer, Because it is the *same* in both, only existing in a different manner. If you ask from whence the Son's dominion is? I say *from the Father*, as his *essence* also is: If you ask from whence the *Father's* dominion is? I say *from none*, as I say also of his *essence*: But if you ask me *what*, or how *great*, or how *high*? I say, *equal* in both, and, indeed, *one individual same*, just as the *essence* is*." "Two *unoriginate* divine persons, however otherwise *inseparable*, would be *two gods*, according to the *antients*: but if one be not only *consubstantial*, but also of the other, and referred up to him as a *head* or *fountain*, two *such* persons were believed to be but one God†." "I am fully and unalterably persuaded, that the true and right way is, to admit the *subordination*, and to assert the *essential*

† Bp. Beveridge on the 39 Articles, page 62. § Dr. Waterland's Second Vindication, page 20. * Ibid. p. 43. † Ibid. p. 207.

divinity of all the three persons together with it. Both parts appear to be founded in scripture, and were undoubtedly believed by the *antients* in general*.”

BISHOP Pearson had the same views of this doctrine : “ We may, saith that learned *Prelate*, safely observe, that in the very name of Father there is something of *eminence* which is not in that of Son, and some kind of priority we must ascribe unto him whom we call the *first*, in respect of him whom we term the *second* person ; and, as we cannot but ascribe it, so we must endeavor to preserve it. Now that privilege or priority consisteth not in this, that the essence or attributes of one, are greater than the essence or attributes of the other ; but only in this, that the Father hath that essence of himself, the Son by *communication* from the Father ; from whence he acknowledgeth that he is from him, John vii. 19. that he liveth by him, John vi. 57. that the Father gave to him to have life in himself, John v. 26. And generally referreth all things to him, as received from him. Wherefore, in this sense, some of the *antients* (*Athanasius contra Arianos*, &c.) have not stuck to interpret those words, *The Father is greater than I*, of Christ, as the Son of God, as the second person in the blessed Trinity ; but still with reference, not unto his essence, but his generation, by which he is understood to have his BEING from the Father, who only hath it of himself, and is the *original* of all power and essence in the Son†.” “ We must not, therefore, so far involve ourselves in the darkness of this mystery, as to deny that glory which is

* Dr. Waterland's Second Vindication. page 531. † Pearson on the Creed. 9th edit. page 74.

clearly due unto the Father ; whose *pre-eminence* undeniably consisteth in this, that he is God, not of any other, but is God of himself. It is no diminution to the Son to say, that he is *from another*, for his *very name* imports as much ; but it were a diminution to the Father to speak so of him : And there must be some pre-eminence where there is a place of derogation. What the *Father* is, he is *from none* ; what the *Son* is, he is *from him* : what the first is, he giveth ; what the second is, he receiveth*.”

“ This priority doth properly and naturally result from the divine *paternity* ; so that the Son must necessarily be second unto the Father, from whom he receiveth his origination, and the Holy Spirit unto the Son. Neither can we be thought to want a sufficient foundation for this priority of the first person of the Trinity, if we look upon the numerous testimonies of the *antient doctors* of the church, who have not stuck to call the Father the *origin*, the *cause*, the *author*, the *root*, the *fountain*, and the *head* of the Son, or the whole divinity†.” [Note, here he cites many of the fathers.] “ By these titles it appeareth clearly, first, that they made a considerable difference between the person of the Father, *of* whom are all things ; and the person of the Son, *by* whom are all things‡.”

“ The proper notion of the Father, in whom we believe, is this ; that he is a person subsisting eternally in the one infinite essence of the Godhead ; which essence or subsistence he hath received from no other person, but hath *communicated* the same essence in which himself subsisteth,

* Pearson on the Creed, p. 35. † Ibid. p. 37, 38. ‡ Ibid. 38.

by generation, to another person ; who, by that generation, is the Son*.” “ It is most reasonable to assert that *there is but ONE PERSON, who is from none* ; and the very generation of the Son, and procession of the Holy Ghost, undeniably prove, that neither of these two can be that person ; for whosoever is generated, is from him which is the genitor ; and whosoever proceedeth, is from him from whom he proceedeth, whatsoever the nature of the generation or procession be. It followeth, therefore, that this person is the *Father*, which name speaks nothing of dependence, nor supposeth any kind of priority in another : From hence it is observed that the name of God, taken absolutely, is often, in the scriptures, spoken of the Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ; which, as it is most true and fit to be believed, is also a *most necessary truth*, and therefore to be acknowledged, *for the avoiding multiplication and plurality of gods*. For IF THERE WERE MORE THAN ONE WHICH WERE FROM NONE, it could not be denied, but there were MORE GODS THAN ONE. Wherefore, this origination, in the divine paternity, hath ANTIENTLY been looked upon as the assertion of the *Unity*. And, therefore, the Son and the Holy Ghost have been believed to be but one God with the Father, because *both* FROM the *Father*, who is ONE, and so the *union* of them †.” “ The divine essence, which Christ had as the Word, before he was conceived by the Virgin *Mary*, he had not of himself, but by *communication* from God the Father. For this is not to be denied, that

* Pearson on the Creed. p. 39.

† Ibid. p. 40.

there

there can be but one essence properly divine, and so but one God of infinite wisdom, power, and majesty; also, that there can be *but ONE PERSON ORIGINALLY OF HIMSELF*, subsisting in that infinite being, because a *plurality of more persons so subsisting, would necessarily infer a multiplicity of gods*. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is originally God, as not receiving his eternal being from any other; wherefore it necessarily followeth, that Jesus Christ, who is certainly not the Father, cannot be a person subsisting in the divine nature *originally of himself*, and consequently being "we have already proved that he is truly and properly the eternal God; he must be understood to have the *Godhead communicated* to him by the Father. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine, saith Christ, because in him is the same fulness of the Godhead; and, more than that the Father cannot have: but yet in that perfect and absolute equality there is, notwithstanding, this disparity, that the Father hath the Godhead not from the Son, or any other; whereas the Son hath it from the Father. *Christ is the true God and eternal life, but that he is so, is from the Father*; not by participation, but by *communication*. The Son *equal* in respect of his *nature*, the Father *greater* in reference to the *communication* of the Godhead*."

THUS this learned bishop also hath plainly declared his own sentiments, and those of the Fathers on the article of the Trinity: he hath shewed in what sense they understood the Father, Son, and Spirit, to be three persons,

* Pearson on the Creed. p. 134.

and

and but one God. And this prelate was never, I believe, charged, nor ever suspected of being heterodox in the doctrine of the Trinity; unless by some few of late years, who seem to reckon that the antient Fathers, and many other great divines, who have written in defence of the Deity of Christ against the *Arians*; and of the Trinity against the *Sabellians*, to be little better than those whom they so zealously opposed; and consequently that they contended with their own shadow.

SHOULD any one imagine that these authors, which I have here quoted, are misrepresented; or that they speak in other places in a manner very different from what is above related; I shall only say, that I have endeavoured truly and faithfully to represent their meaning, as well as to cite their words: and that the sense of what they have written on the subject, is fairly, though briefly set forth; nor can they be understood to mean otherwise, than those cited passages plainly signify, without making them palpably inconsistent and self-contradictory.

THAT which is called a *modal Trinity* (which, as some affirm, is all that the church means by a distinction of persons in the Godhead) seems considerably to differ from the sense of the above cited authors; and is thus represented: "God is most perfectly *one* in respect of *essence, understanding, power of action and will*. These are as truly and *numerically one* in God, as in an *angel*, or a *man*: There is, however, such a *modal* distinction in God, that thereupon he is *called*, and *is* three persons; not in the ordinary *vulgar* sense of the term persons; but in the

the theological*." "The divine nature is three persons, as he is *self-living, self-knowing, and self-loving*†." "They differ as a *mind* and its *acts*‡." "The first person is the Godhead (or God) under the *notion* of unbegotten MIND: the second is the same God or divine essence, under the *idea* of reflex WISDOM: the third is the same Godhead under the *note* of divine love§." This author likewise says, that St. *Austin* has written 15 books of the *Trinity*, and that the sum and substance of them all is only this: "*Mens, notitia, amor* (MIND, WISDOM, LOVE) are the three persons of the holy Trinity: The blessed Trinity, is GOD, considered as original WISDOM, and as KNOWING, and WILLING himself. This was followed by the school-doctors and middle ages; and it is referred to, in all the confessions of faith, by the councils of those ages,"§ &c.

Now this *antient* explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity, whether *modal* or *real*; and of Christ's Deity as a divine person eternally begotten of the Father, hath of late years been exploded by many as dangerous and heretical. I do not indeed pretend to justify the opinion or explanation which those learned men, on either side, have given us of the doctrine, for I rather think they were all mistaken; but I see no more danger in any of their schemes than in that of more modern invention. That Christ is a divine person begotten of the Father, is at this day denied by many, and violently opposed. Mr. *Hutchinson* calls it, "That *self-contradicting* notion of eternal generation, which,

* Mr. Stephen Nye on the Trinity. p. 18. † Ibid. p. 19. ‡ Ibid. p. 22.

§ Ibid. p. 25. § Ibid. p. 30.

he adds, has *confounded the christian faith* more than any other position *." He and his followers seem to represent the matter after this manner: That there are three co-equal, *unoriginated*, and *self-existent persons* in one Jehovah; that the names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not names of nature, or expressive of the relation which they bear towards each other in the Godhead, but are merely *oecomenical* and *names of office*, which the sacred three assumed when, as is supposed, they mutually engaged by an eternal compact, to redeem and save sinners of the human race.

WHEREFORE it seems plain and manifest, that the opinions and faith of the ancient *Athanasians*, and of the modern *Hutchinsonians*, concerning the doctrine of the Trinity, cannot both be scriptural and true: nay, it is evident that they think so themselves; for, on the one hand, it is asserted, that the "notion of eternal generation is self-contradictory, and confounds or destroys the christian faith:" And, on the other hand, it is asserted, that "the Son is begotten by an eternal communication of the divine essence." A learned divine of this present age (Dr. Gill) affirms, that "all the important doctrines of it (the christian religion) depend, even upon the Sonship of Christ as a divine person; and as by generation, even eternal generation."

On the contrary, Dr. *Ridley* seems to think that Christ is the Son of God, not by nature, as a divine person, but by *office* only. He likewise observes, that the distinction of persons in the Godhead (for of that I think he is speaking)

* Abstract of Hutchinson, p. 213.

"is certainly one of the most difficult heads of divinity that can be insisted on; and some, he observes, have made it more so by their attempting to explain it; he adds, I have sometimes thought that it would be the safest, and most eligible way, to pass it over, as a doctrine less necessary to be understood." And, indeed, I am inclined to think so too, according to the common way of explaining it, on either of the plans already mentioned.

Now, if some great divines have attempted to declare that which God hath not spoken, and to explain that which is inexplicable; it is nothing strange that their various schemes should appear to be obscure, contradictory, and unintelligible; a specimen of which Dr. Ridgley himself gives us in these words: "As to the eternal generation of the Son, it is generally explained in this manner: The Father is called by some the *fountain* of the *Godhead*, an expression taken from some of the fathers who defended the *Nicene* faith; but others of late have rather chose to call the Father, the *fountain* of the *Trinity*. Many choose to express themselves about this mystery in these terms: That the Father *communicated* the divine essence to the Son, which is the *most common* mode of speaking; though others think it safer to say, that he communicated the divine *personality* to him: but I cannot tell which is least exceptionable. I find others calling it, the Father's giving the divine essence to the Son, &c. but none of them who use this expression suppose that the Son's Deity is founded on the arbitrary will of the Father; for they all assert, that the divine nature is communicated *necessarily* and *from all eternity*, as the sun

communicates its rays necessarily, which are of equal duration with it ; so that while they make use of a word, which, according to its most known acceptation, seems subversive of the faith, *they happily, for truth's sake, explain away the proper sense thereof* ; so that all they can be blamed for therein, by the adversary, is impropriety of expression : Again, *others* speak a little more exceptionably, when explaining the eternal generation of the Son ; they say, that the Father *produced* him, but *this idea* they happily *explain away* ; and therefore say, it is not such a production where the cause produces the effect : though some of the fathers who have been in the Trinitarian scheme, have commonly called the Father the *cause* of the Son*." He adds, " So far as I have any light, either from the scriptures, (such as Psalm ii. 7. Prov. viii. 22—25. Micah v. 2. Hebrews i. 3. John v. 26. &c. &c.) or the analogy of faith, I cannot but conclude that these and all others of the like nature, that are brought to prove the eternal generation, or Sonship of Christ, respect him as God-man, Mediator ; and those other scriptures that speak of the procession of the Holy Ghost, respect the subserviency of his acting as a divine person to the Mediator's glory, in applying the work of redemption. I hope that we assert nothing but what tends to the glory of the Son and Spirit, establisheth the doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity, or agrees with the commonly received faith, *so far as it is founded on scripture* ; without being tenacious of those modes of speaking, which have the sanction of *venerable*

* Dr. Ridgley's Body of Divinity. p. 72, 73.

antiquity, and are supported by the reputation of those that have used them†." "If we consider the properties of Sonship among men, every one who stands in this relation to a Father, is dependent on him: In this respect the Father is the cause of his Son, &c. and the relation of Sonship always connotes inferiority, and an obligation to yield obedience. I do not apply this in every respect to the Sonship of Christ, but his character as Mediator seems to answer to it more than any thing else that can be said of him, since he, as such, hath the same individual nature with the Father, and also is inferior to, and dependent on him." The doctor adds, "This account of Christ's Sonship does not take away any argument by which we prove his Deity, for when we consider him as Mediator, we always suppose him to be both God and man, which is what we intend when we speak of the person of Christ in this respect*."

Dr. Gill, on the contrary, directly opposes this scheme of the Trinity. "It is easy, saith he, to observe that the distinction of persons in the Deity depends on the generation of the Son; take away that which would destroy the relation between the first and second persons, and the distinction drops‡." "Without this, the doctrine of the Trinity can never be supported; without this, the distinction of persons in the Trinity can never be maintained; and, indeed, without this, there is none at all: take this away, and all distinction ceases. A writer of the present age (Dr. Ridgley) pretends to hold the doc-

† Dr. Ridgley's Body of Divinity. page 76.

* Ibid. p. 77.

‡ Gill's Body of Divinity. vol. 1. p. 239.

trine of three distinct persons in the Deity, and yet explodes this." "He says, That his account of Christ's Sonship, that is, *by office*, and *not by nature*, does not take away any argument by which we prove his Deity: But without his eternal generation, no proof can be made of his being a distinct divine person in the Godhead, and so not of his Deity."—"The doctrines of redemption, justification, atonement, and pardon of sin, depend upon the divinity of the person of Christ, *as the Son of God*.*"

THUS these great men differ. In another place he saith, "The divine nature is common to the three persons in God, but not *communicated* from one to another." [Here he opposes all the *Nicene* fathers.] "These equally subsist in the unity of the divine essence, and that without any derivation or communication of it from one to another. I know it is represented by some, who otherwise are sound in the doctrine of the Trinity, that the divine nature is *communicated* from the Father to the Son, and Spirit; and that he is *fons Deitatis*, the fountain of Deity, which I think are *unsafe* phrases:" (if *unsafe*, how can *they* be *sound* that used them?) "since they seem to imply a *priority* in the Father, to the other two persons; for he that communicates must, at least in order of nature, and according to our conception of things, be prior to whom the communication is made," &c. "It is better to say, that they are *self-existent*, and exist together in the same undivided essence; and jointly, equally, and as early one as another, possess the same nature†." "The Father

* Gill's Body of Divinity. vol. 1. p. 241. † Ibid. p. 71.

generating the Son, may be considered in priority *previous* to the Son generated by him, though not in priority of time, of which there can be none in eternity†.

PERHAPS this great divine may be thought to contradict *himself*, as well as all *others*, and even to deny the divine Sonship of Christ, as by generation, though he had before asserted it: for can the same person, in the same nature, be *self-existent* and also *begotten*?

Now from the above quotations we may make the following remarks:

I. Bishop Pearson asserts, that there is but *one* person who is from none, and that this person is the Father, which he declares, ought to be believed as a most *necessary* truth, for the avoiding multiplication and *plurality of gods*; for he affirms, if there were more persons than one which were of none, it could not be denied, but that there were *more gods than one*: therefore he maintains that Christ cannot be a person subsisting in the divine nature originally of himself: Nevertheless, as Christ is truly and properly the eternal God (which he allows and maintains) he must be understood to have the Godhead *communicated* to him by the Father. Bp. Beveridge, Dr. Waterland, and Mr. Perkins speak to the same purpose. Dr. Ridgley thinks otherwise: He supposes Christ to be the Son of God, not by nature, but by *office*. Dr. Gill, in several respects, differs from them all, for he asserts, that the divine nature is *not communicated* from one divine person to another, but that the three persons are equally *self-existent*; yet he affirms the Son to be *begotten*, as a *divine*

† Gill's Body of Divinity. vol. 1. p. 243.

person : He may indeed be supposed to contradict this in some other places (as above noted) where he *seems* to assert directly the contrary. He affirms also that Dr. *Ridgley's* representation of Christ, as a Son by office, and not by nature, is a denial of his divine personality and Deity, and is fundamentally subversive of his redemption, atonement, &c.

THUS these learned divines, who may be considered as heads or principal men among the *Episcopalians*, *Independents*, and *Baptists*, have gone into very different and opposite schemes in explaining the Trinity, and yet they all seem to hold it as an essential, and profess to be governed by the light and rule of the divine word; but both, I think, cannot be true; that is to say, either it is not an *essential* doctrine in *their sense* of it, or some of them at least have left the *rule* of the *divine word*. But shall we therefore unchristian any of these great men, because they have had such different views of this doctrine? By no means; he that doth it, let him answer for it: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?"

2. IT is to be lamented, that on account of their differences they sometimes severely censure, and seem to unchristian one another. For some of them, when speaking on the subject, will venture to charge the other party with being guilty of *heresy*, at least what they call *heresy*; but what is most remarkable, they will even charge each other with being guilty of the *same heresy*, even with *denying* the proper Godhead of Christ; for if the one assert that Christ is a *divine person*, as a Son *begotten* in the essence; this, say the other party, is a *begotten God*, which

is

is the *Arians* God; whereas those on the other side affirm, that they who deny Christ to be a *divine person*, as a Son *eternally begotten* of the Father, do *deny* his *proper Deity*, and *divine personality*.

3. It is plain and evident, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as held by many divines of the present age, very widely differs from that of former ages; and, though they *pretend* to agree with them in the *main*, yet in truth they *essentially* differ from them: for it is manifest that the sentiments of many moderns, on the article of the Trinity, were expressly condemned by the *antient Athanasians*, as *Polytheism* and heresy: And they would, I doubt not, have been censured as heretics of that sort, had they happened to have lived in the days of the *Nicene* fathers; for they never understood, nor would they admit of more than *one* divine person to be *unbegotten*, and *self-existent*. Dr. Gill, who zealously contends for the eternal generation of the Son, as a divine person, yet very unaccountably maintains, at the same time, his *personal self-existence*; but it is plain from *Perkins*, *Pearson*, *Beveridge*, &c. that they never *so* held nor believed it.

UPON the whole, *then*, it seems to me, that the *present* and *popular doctrine* of the Trinity is of *modern* date, and of human invention; and is properly what the former ages of the church called *Polytheism*. Thus, by endeavoring to avoid what they judged to be a mistake and error in their forefathers, they have, in word and appearance at least, fallen into a much greater and more dangerous one.

4. THEY widely differ from the *antient Athanasians* in this respect also, who, we are told, both held and maintained

tained that Christ, as a *divine* person, was *inferior* to the Father, both with respect to his person as *begotten*, and also the *communication* of the divine essence; which they affirm he received from the Father: but the moderns, I think, deny both; for they refer his equality with the Father, not to his *essence*, as the antients did; but to his *person*, and as being equally *self-existent* with the Father; and his inferiority, they refer to his *human nature* only, which the antients did not; hence such scriptures as these; "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Psalm ii. 7. "My Father is greater than I," John xiv. 28. and again, "The head of Christ is God," 1 Cor. xi. 3. are very differently understood and expounded by them: Is it not then apparent, that there is a manifest disagreement between them, in the very *essentials* of the doctrine? yet, notwithstanding this, both parties professedly hold, and teach it as a fundamental article of faith. But is it credible that good men should oppose each other in any *fundamental* of the *christian* faith?

5. FROM these considerations, it is, I think, plain and obvious, that the scripture doctrine of the Trinity is not sufficiently explained, nor well understood by christians in general; no, not by the learned among them: for were this the case, ministers and people would doubtless be more *united* in their sentiments, and more *settled* in their minds about it; and if, after so many *centuries*, men of the greatest learning and piety in the church are still divided, and *happier* in overthrowing each other's *scheme*, than in *establishing* their own; is it not probable that each of their plans is defective in one part or other; so that a proper

proper medium betwixt the two extremes of the *Atbanasian* and *Hutchinsonian* creeds may probably determine the matter, and reconcile (if reconcileable) the opposite and contending parties. Therefore,

6. To me it seems clear and plain, that the generality of writers, in treating of this doctrine, have gone further than the divine word will warrant : Where doth the scripture say, that Christ the Son of God was eternally begotten of the Father, *in the essence of Deity* ? or, what authority have we from scripture to affirm, that he is the Son of God *by office*, and not by nature ? or, where doth the scripture declare, that Christ is a divine *self-existent* person, *in Jehovah*, *distinct* from the Father ? The scripture indeed declares, that Christ is the Son of God, the only begotten of the Father ; and that he is appointed by the Father to the office of a Mediator between God and men : The scripture also plainly declares and testifies that he was in the beginning with God, and that God created all things by him, and that he was in him reconciling the world unto himself, &c. Now, had men been content with what God hath been pleased to reveal of this mystery, there would not have been such bitter strife and contention among christians on this subject, as we have heard and seen ; nor would they have charged one another with heresy *merely* on account of their differences in the explanation of this doctrine.

C H A P. II.

Contains a short view of the names and perfections of God.

IT is an observation of Bishop *Pearson*, that “we shall always find all nations of the world more prone unto idolatry than to Atheism; and readier to *multiply than deny the Deity.*” But he very justly adds, “It is as impossible there should be more gods than *one*, as that there should be none at all.” This, he says (and is to be understood) of one absolutely supreme and independent being, whom we call God, and who is the only living and true God; for else there are gods many, and lords many, as the scripture testifies; but neither of these is Jehovah the living God: and the reason why others, men and angels, and that both good and bad, are sometimes called gods and lords in scripture, seems to be this; either because they have *usurped* a godlike authority and dominion over men, and have required a sort of divine homage to be paid them; hence *Satan* is called, “the god of this world:” or else, because they truly represent and act by the authority and power of the most high God, as those that are appointed, commissioned, and sent by him, to act in his name and stead: Such was *Moses* and *Joshua*; and such the angels that were sent to destroy *Sodom*; but they

they must never be confounded with the living God, whose name alone is Jehovah, for he is but one, and there is not another.

IT seems, then, that the creed of *Polytheists* and *Atheists* is equally absurd and false: The former goes beyond, and so subverts the truth; the latter doth not come up to its sacred standard, and so denies it. One denies the truth of God's existence, and the other makes more *Jehovahs* than one, which is a denial of absolute perfection, or proper Deity, to any: it behoves us, then, in this, as well as in every other sacred truth, to observe that divine command, "Thou shalt not add unto it, nor diminish from it." As it is necessary to believe the existence of God, to believe that he is; so it is equally necessary to believe, that he is but *one*: right reason and divine revelation are perfectly agreed in this matter; they both unitedly testify, that there is, and can be, but one SUPREME, almighty, and *self-existent* BEING, and this Being is God. It is impossible, and unimaginable there should be *two such Beings*: *two SUPREMES, two ALMIGHTIES, two SELF-EXISTENT beings, or persons*, is a manifest absurdity: Therefore the belief of the existence and unity of God must stand or fall together: he that denies the one, denies the other; and he that truly believes the one, believes the other also.

IF we recede and depart from this, we leave the foundation of all true religion; for the unity of God is not only an *essential*, but the prime and *chief* article of every christian's faith. The scriptures are quite plain and full in declaring and testifying this great truth; "I am JE-

HOVAH, saith God, and *there is none else*; I am GOD, and there is none like me," Isa. xlv. 5, 6. and again, "I, even I am HE, and there is no God with me, I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever," Deut. xxxii. 39, 40. "The high and lofty ONE that inhabiteth eternity," Isa. lvii. 15. "GOD is *one*," saith the apostle, Gal. iii. 20. and again, "We know that there is no other God but *one*; for though there be that are called gods, as there be gods many and lords many; yet to us there is but ONE GOD, the Father," I Cor. viii. 6. Our Lord himself declares this to be the fundamental truth of the bible, with which he prefaces the first and great commandment; whereby he intimates, that we cannot truly love and serve God, unless we know and believe him to be what he is, not two or three, but one only. The words are cited from Deut. vi. 4. "Hear, O *Israel*, the Lord our God is one Lord," Mark xii. 29.

2. As God is one, so he is a being possess'd of all possible perfections. God is a pure Spirit, infinite in majesty and mercy, most blessed for ever; glorious in holiness, goodness, and truth. He is immortal and impassible; incapable of receiving any addition to his essential glories and perfections; or of suffering any loss or diminution of his glory, by all that his creatures can do, or suffer, in any way whatsoever. "If thou sinnest, what dost thou against him? or if thou be righteous, what givest thou him, or what receiveth he of thy hand?" Job xxxv. 6, 7. God (I speak with reverence) cannot give his *essential glory* and *self-existence* to another, i. e. he cannot make *another* JEHOVAH, for he cannot deny himself; and thus I understand that
 scripture,

scripture, where he saith, "I am JEHOVAH, that is my name, and *my glory* will I not give to another." When, therefore, God the Father, who hath life in himself, is said to have given to the Son also to have life in himself, it doth not mean, as I conceive, that the Father, by that communication to the Son, made him another Jehovah, or another co-equal person with himself; but that he gave his own Spirit, which is life, to his Son Jesus Christ, as man and mediator, that he might be a head of vital influence to others; and hence he is said to be *made a quickening Spirit*.

AGAIN, JEHOVAH is a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he. In understanding he is infinite, in knowledge omniscient, in power omnipotent: by the immensity of his presence, he fills heaven and earth with the glory of his goodness, wisdom, and power. O come let us worship and fall down, and kneel before this ever living, ever blessed, and glorious God, for HE is Jehovah our maker, Psalm xcv. 6. His *name*, his nature, is holy: His *name*, his nature, is love; for *he sent his only begotten Son into the world*, to die for our sins, *that we might live through him*, 1 John iv. 9.

3. As God is the greatest and best of beings, it is fit that we should know and love him as such; and to this end he hath been pleased to reveal himself unto us by several names, as well as by his essential attributes, the chief of which names are these three, יהוה, Jehovah, אלהים, *Θεός*, God, and אדני, *Κυριός*, Lord.

BY the name JEHOVAH, God hath revealed himself to us as the SUPREME BEING, that *necessarily* exists. His SELF-

EXISTENCE, ETERNITY, and IMMUTABILITY, seem to be comprehend and expressed by this name. And as Jehovah alone is the fountain of life, and hath the powers of being in himself; therefore he can and doth give being to whom, and whatsoever he pleases. He is the author, cause, and parent of all things: The heaven of heavens, with all their hosts; the earth, and all things that in them are, owe their being to Jehovah, "who hath created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created," Rev. iv. 11. There is no word in the *Greek* tongue that properly answers to this *Hebrew* name of God; though it is often rendered *κύριος*, Lord, because supreme dominion belongs to Jehovah, and is included in his name; but St. *John* seems to have expressed, what the *Hebrew* name imports, by *ὁ ὢν, ὁ νῦν, ὁ ἐρχόμενος*, i. e. he *who is, and who was, and who is to come*: for the name Jehovah seems to comprehend and contain in it, both the past, present, and future: he was from eternity, is now, and will be to eternity, the same; for with God there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. I conceive also that Jehovah is a name not expressive of the *bare essence* of Deity, but the *personality* of the divine being is included in it; and if so, then the name JEHOVAH signifies, HE that was, is, and will be. THE other names of God seem to be names of relation.

ALEIM, *אלים*, God. By this name, as I conceive, Jehovah hath made himself known to us, as the mighty God: Thus the Psalmist, "Who is a *rock*, save our God?" Psalm xviii. 31. likewise as the true and only object of divine worship: Thus *Elijah* seems to use the name, "If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if *Baal*, then follow
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low him:" and again, "The God that answereth by fire, let him be God," 1 Kings xviii. 21, 24. This name also seems to signify, that he stands, engaged as by oath, in a covenant relation to his people; wherein he hath promised and sworn, by his great name, to protect and bless, and save all them that truly worship and serve, and put their trust in him.

DIVINES, indeed, are not altogether agreed about the derivation of ALEIM in *Hebrew*, or of Θεοι in *Greek*: But I humbly conceive that the sense of the word is properly pointed out in the above paraphrase or explanation of it; and I think also that it contains the substance of what the best divines have observed upon it. If it be said that the *Hebrew noun* is plural, and that it must properly be understood of a plurality of persons in Jehovah; it may be answered, that the name in *Greek* is singular, and, I humbly conceive, that ALEIM is not designed to express the manner in which Jehovah subsists in his own divine essence; and that it may with greater propriety be understood of the essential powers and perfections in the divine nature, or of the different relations he stands in to his people; than of divine persons.

If it be derived from אלה, juravit, he swore; it cannot, I think, be understood of three divine persons engaged or bound by oath; for we never read of more than one swearing, and that is neither the Son, nor the Holy Spirit, but always God the Father; and it may be used plurally of the one God in this view, because he sware first to Christ, and afterwards to his people, as believers. in Christ. See Psalm cx. 4. Heb. vi. 17. or else because the

the oath respected different objects ; viz. the exaltation and establishment of Christ upon his throne, as King, Mediator ; and the salvation of God's elect in him : and likewise the certain destruction of all their enemies. This name **ALBIM** is given to angels, kings, and judges ; and to *one* person only ; and therefore it seems to me improbable, that it should be a name expressive of a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, or of the *modus* of the divine existence : but this point will be more fully considered afterwards.

THE name *Adoni*, which Jehovah hath assumed, in *Greek* *Xoçes*, Lord ; respects, I conceive, his supreme dominion and absolute government of the world : By this name he may be considered as the sovereign ruler, Lord, and supreme judge of the world ; to whom we are bound to yield the most entire obedience, and to whom we are accountable for all our thoughts, words, and actions. This name *Adoni*, or *Adonim*, is also plural ; but it is generally agreed, that it means but one person, and is not intended to express a plurality of persons, as if there were *three lords* in one **JEHOVAH** ; but it seems rather to be used by way of eminence, as the name **ALBIM** ; denoting the universal and absolute dominion of God as our ruler and Lord, comprehending the variety and excellency of the divine government. This name is in scripture given also to masters, rulers, and kings in general, and is, for the most part, though spoken of but one person, used in a plural form. It is often used of Christ, and seems to be applied to him eminently, as Jehovah's king, the prince of the kings of the earth ; or as King of kings, and Lord of lords

lords. It is very frequently connected with Jehovah, as at other times ALEIM is, and, in this connection, seems to mean Jehovah the only absolute Lord, and supreme ruler of the world; as when ALEIM is connected with Jehovah, it seems to mean, JEHOVAH, the Almighty, the only true object of divine worship, who stands in a covenant relation to his people, and is engaged by oath to save his worshippers that trust in him alone; and in righteousness to destroy all his and their enemies. Now the head of the church is Christ, therefore the oath was immediately and first made to him, and afterwards with all his believing people in Christ: Thus the covenant and promise, which God made to *Abraham*, is said to be confirmed in Christ, to whom the promise of life was given for his people, and who also received grace for them before the world began. See Tit. i. 2. & 2 Tim. i. 9.

God also calls himself *אב*, *av*, a *Father*; which name, as I conceive, is chiefly designed to express the near and special relation which he stands in to Christ and his people, as begotten by him, and believing in him. A Father supposes a son, or offspring; it is a name which is expressive of that relation, nor can it subsist without it: God then began to be a Father when he had a Son, the image of himself, and not before; it is not a name co-eternal with his being, nor essential to his nature: he might be Jehovah, and not be a Father, unless it be supposed that he hath a Son co-equal and co-eternal with himself, *naturally* and *necessarily* begotten in his own essence; but this seems not to be declared in scripture, and is thought by many (though by some asserted) not to be

well supported from divine revelation : however this is certain, when God had a Son, then he was a Father, but not before; and he is called and owned so to be, primarily, and eminently with relation to Christ, whose God and Father Jehovah is; for to him he saith, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee;" who also is called, "the first born among many brethren." All the saints are called the sons of God, and are said to be begotten of him, and he is declared to be their God and Father; but Christ is eminently so styled: he is called God's *own Son*, and *his only begotten*: But as all believers are begotten of God, and are his children by faith in Christ Jesus, therefore Jehovah, the only living and true God, is called their Father also; which name of relation is commonly given to the true God in the New Testament.

I CONCLUDE then, that there is but one Jehovah, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in all, and through all: *above* all *personally* considered, as the self-existent God: *in* all, as dwelling in Christ, and in all saints by him; for the head of the church is Christ, and the head of Christ is God: *through* all, by his infinite eternal Spirit, which he hath given to Christ immediately without measure; and by him in measure to all the church, his living members: *in* whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, to be an *habitation of God through* the Spirit.

Is it not then plain from hence, that God, absolutely considered, is no other than GOD the FATHER, who is so called, because he stands in that relation to his Son Jesus Christ, and to all his spiritual seed in him. For though God be the FATHER of all spirits; yet he owns none for his children,

children, that do not bear the image of his holiness, see John viii. 42, 44. Perhaps you will say, that a God in one person, is to us a new and strange doctrine, and what we have not been used to hear : I answer, Search^b the scriptures, if it be not the plain and express doctrine of scripture, believe it not ; but if the scripture reveals and declares it ; certainly it is our bounden duty to believe and embrace it as a divine truth, let who will oppose and contradict it : we ought to obey God rather than men. Divine faith is not believing what man saith, but what God saith.

REFLECTIONS.

1. It appears, from what hath been said, that Jehovah the living and true God, is but One : whatever therefore be our sentiments of the Father, Son, and Spirit as Three, it is our bounden duty so to conceive and so to speak of them, as not to divide or multiply the Godhead ; but carefully and constantly to maintain the divine simplicity and unity of God.

Is it not a much greater evil, and more dangerous in its consequences, to misconceive of, and misrepresent, the unity of Jehovah ; than to misconceive of him as a *Trinity* in the essence ? The scripture testifies that God is *one* : but it never says, he is *three*, much less *three persons* in one Godhead. A *TRIUNE GOD*, when spoken and meant of the one Jehovah, is, I think, no where found in scripture, neither in words, nor in sense : it is a phrase of modern invention, and no where to be met with in the wholsom doctrine of the bible ; but found only in the

metaphysical divinity of the schools. I cannot find that God hath any where revealed the *manner* of his subsisting in the divine essence. But the scripture plainly declares, that there is but one living and true God the FATHER ; and but one Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the SON of *that one God, the Father* ; and that there is but one Holy Ghost, who is the SPIRIT of *that one God, the Father*.

2. GOD is a being incomprehensible in his nature and perfections. How he fills heaven and earth at the same time, who can declare ? Thus saith Jehovah, " Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool," yet he testifies at the same time, that in all the fulness of his Godhead he dwells in Christ bodily ; therefore *in* and *by* Christ alone, the invisible and incomprehensible God is revealed and made known to men : But our knowledge of God in this present state must be imperfect and in part only. The perfect vision of the ever blessed God is reserved for the upper worlds, " for no man can see his face and live : " *Paul* himself, who had been caught up into the third heavens, yet declared " that he knew but in part, and only saw through a glass darkly ; " therefore we should not attempt to be wise above what is written ; lest He, that is higher than the highest, punish our temerity and reprove our folly : but let us diligently seek to know, and fear, and love him, in his Son Jesus Christ ; then shall we joy and trust in him as our God and Father, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. That man knows most of God, who, by the faith of Christ, walks humbly with him,

him, and is most fruitful in good works. "To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I shew the salvation of God," Psalm l. 23.

3. WHATEVER be the manner of Jehovah's subsisting in his own infinite Godhead, you cannot fail of finding and obtaining the *true* knowledge of God, if you seek to know and find him in his Son Jesus Christ, who was crucified, whom God also raised from the dead; for the Father *dwelleth* in the Son. Neither can you miss of his divine love, and favor; and of finding acceptance with God unto eternal life, if you seek it in Christ: for he is our peace, who hath made peace by the blood of his cross, and God the Father, who hath exalted him with his own right hand to be a prince and Saviour, hath expressly declared in his faithful word, "that whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."

THIS, then, is a plain, scriptural, and sure way of seeking and obtaining eternal life; viz. in coming to the Father by the Son; or in other words, in coming to the one living and true God, by one Mediator, Jesus Christ; "who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father: To whom be glory for ever, Amen."

Gal. i. 4, 5.

C H A P. III.

Of Christ the Son of God.

WE have seen in the foregoing chapter that there is, and can be but one living and true God : In this we shall attempt to speak of Christ his Son, his only begotten, whom we are concerned above all things to know, for he is the MEDIATOR between God and man ; “neither is there salvation in any other ; for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” Acts iv. 12. The knowledge of Christ also leads us to the knowledge of God the Father, for he himself testifies, “If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also,” John viii. 19.

Now, as Christ is represented to us in scripture, as being crowned with many crowns ; (by which, I conceive, is meant the many victories which he hath obtained ; and also the eminent dignity to which he is exalted, above all other kings and conquerors : and hence he hath a name written, “King of kings, and Lord of lords,” Rev. xiv. 12, 16.) So is he likewise called by many names, the chief of which we shall endeavor to explain.

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LET us consider him as the *Son of God*, which is his *proper name*; for, as a Son, he is doubtless *begotten* of the Father, and, as such, is the *image* of the invisible God. God hath many sons, but Christ is peculiarly and eminently his Son: He is so the Son of God, as no other person in heaven and earth is, or can be. Christ had no human father, as other men have, but God himself alone immediately begat, and is, the *proper Father* of Christ; and therefore he is called *God's own Son*.

As to the manner of his unspeakable generation, he is called his *only begotten*; and, as to his personal excellencies and glory, he is called, "the *brightness* of the Father's glory, and the *express image* of his person." We are not indeed told *how*, or of what *substance* he was begotten: And, I conceive, it would be too curious, if not presumptuous, for us to enquire into that mystery, seeing God hath not been pleased to reveal it to us: And who then can declare his generation? But this we know, that he is the only begotten of the Father, the image of the invisible God.

As the Son and image of God, he is plainly another person, properly so, and distinct from God: to me it seems plain, that his Sonship alone constitutes his distinct personality: Christ is a proper person distinct from the Father, as a Son, and *only as a Son*; not by *office*, but by *generation*. If it be asked, *When* Christ became a Son? I answer; the scripture saith, he was begotten of God, and consequently was the Son of God *before the world began*. The *Soci-nians* indeed deny that he had any existence previous to his incarnation. And there are some others, counted *orthodox*,

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who have gone into the opposite extreme; *these* make the Son, as such, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father that begat him; and by just consequence, at least according to our ideas, they must deny Christ to be, in any proper sense, the Son of God at all: for neither reason nor scripture will warrant us to say, that he which is begotten, is co-eval with him that begat him.

Thus some persons have presumed, not only to search into the mystery of Christ's generation, but they have even ventured to declare both the *manner* how, and *substance* whereof Christ was begotten. They affirm, that he was begotten *in* and *of* the essence of Deity, or of God the Father; either by a proper *act* of the divine will, or as a natural and *necessary* emanation of the Godhead; even as the sun doth naturally and necessarily, as it were, beget and send forth the rays of light, which proceed from it: but the scriptures are silent on that head, and therefore it is not to be laid down and asserted as a divine truth; for it is possible that it may not be so: and from divine revelation it seems to me most probable that it is not so; neither doth this image taken from the sun's rays, give us any proper idea of generation: But we have scripture authority to assert, that he was begotten of the Father, and consequently was the Son of God, and that before the worlds were made: for we are assured that *he* was in the beginning *with* God, John i. 1. that *he* is the *beginning* of the creation of God, Rev. iii. 14. and the *first born* of every creature, Col. i. 15. Nor do I think it possible, without wresting the scripture, and doing violence to plain language, to understand these expressions

as denoting the *generation of pure Deity*, or as words spoken *proleptically*. Christ then is *primarily* and *properly* called the SON of God, as the FIRST BORN of all creation, because he was begotten of God before he had created any thing in heaven or earth ; and therefore he is said to be before all things. The apostle likewise seems to intimate, that for this reason, because Christ was God's first born and heir ; therefore God created all things both *by him*, and *for him*.

AGAIN. Christ is called the Son of God, with respect to his incarnation, because God his Father, who sent him into the world, did himself prepare and put upon him that human body, to which he was then united : " the Holy Ghost, saith the angel to *Mary*, shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore, also, that *holy thing* which is born of thee, shall be called *the Son of God*." Here an addition was made to his person, even of a human body, which he had not before : and because that body was formed for him, and he himself was immediately united to it, by the power of God his Father ; therefore, also, he is called the Son of God. Again, this SAME PERSON (for in point of *personality* he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, whether as a pure Spirit, or incarnate) this same person, I say, is, on another account, called the Son of God ; viz. as *risen from the dead*, because he was immediately raised by the glorious power of God the Father, now no more to suffer and die ; therefore, with respect to his glorious resurrection, he saith, " Thou art my Son, *this day have I begotten thee* : " and hence he is called the *first begotten* from the dead : No addition was here made to his person,

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son, save only a change as to the *condition* of it; for his Spirit, which, on the cross, he committed into the hands of his Father, was now *re-united* to his dead body, and both together brought forth into a *new state*, or condition of glory and immortality. It seems then to be the *same person* of the Son of God, that came down from heaven, took *flesh*, suffered death, and rose again; and, as his Spirit was immediately begotten of God before all creation, so his body was immediately formed and prepared for him of God the Father, in the virgin's womb; and by him also was he immediately raised from the dead. There was no intervening *medium* in all this, no other person had any hand in it; the whole, from first to last, was the pure and immediate act of God the Father: so that Christ, considered both as pure spirit, pre-existing; and, as incarnate, and as raised from the dead, he is the *proper* Son of God, and God is his own *proper* FATHER. Therefore Christ, the Son of God, is the *first born* of every creature, and the *first born* from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. Thus Christ the Son of God is the *head* of all creation, and the *head* of the body, the church: for whose sake, being sent of the Father, he came down from heaven, was made flesh, laid down his life, and took it up again.

Now Christ, as to his person, must be always considered as the Son of God, which is a name of *RELATION*, and is never to be referred to his *OFFICE*: Though Christ indeed be, in a *peculiar* and eminent manner, the Son of God; yet he is as truly and properly so, as any of his brethren, whom he redeemed from among men. Therefore in what sense soever Christ is to be conceived of as a Son, in that sense,
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and in no other, he is to be conceived of as a *proper person*, and as ANOTHER PERSON distinct from the Father: so that when the Father sent his Son into the world to save the world, it was not himself that he sent, but another person, even his own Son.

WHEN therefore the WORD, or SON of God, which names mean not two persons, but one only; when, I say, this glorious person, the Son of God, was made flesh; obeyed the law, and bore the curse for sinners, it was not the Father that was made flesh, obeyed, and suffered; but the Son only: and this distinction is always to be maintained; for Deity itself, in its pure essence, whatever be its personal mode of subsisting, could not possibly, in any proper sense, obey or suffer: but the Son of God did, in a proper sense, obey and suffer. Wherefore the *Sabellians* and *Patripassians* do greatly err, if they make the Father and the Son to be but one and the same person, or if they suppose the Godhead to be capable of suffering. They also who hold the personal distinction, and that the Son only suffered, and not the Father; yet seem to me equally chargeable with making Deity to suffer; if they conceive of Christ, as the Son of God, to be a person self-existent, or as subsisting in the pure essence of Deity; for the scripture, I think, plainly declares, that the Son of God, as such, did suffer and die for sinners, without ever intimating that his INDIVIDUAL PERSON consisted of two natures, the *one passible*, the *other impassible*.

I HUMBLY conceive also that it cannot with propriety be supposed, nor doth the scripture any where say, that JEHOVAH, in his pure essence, was *made flesh*: we are

indeed expressly told, that "the Word, who was in the beginning with God, was made flesh:" but here is a plain and proper distinction betwixt God, and the Word that was with him.

2. CHRIST, the Son of God, hath many names given him in scripture, and that, as I conceive, for these reasons.

1. To express his most infinite and *personal* UNION with God the Father, who dwelleth in him, and speaks, and works by him. 2. To denote his proper humanity and union with the church which God hath given him. 3. To declare the several offices and high honors to which he is appointed, and exalted of God the Father: but by whatever name he is called, or by whatever character he is set forth, and made known to us in the sacred word; yet the person meant thereby is always ONE AND THE SAME. If he is called the WORD, an ANGEL, IMMANUEL, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the BRANCH, the SON OF MAN, JESUS, the PRINCE OF PEACE, or by any other name; they all relate to one and the same person; even to that HOLY ONE of God, begotten of him before the world was, and for whom God his Father also prepared him a body of the virgin Mary; therefore his proper and *personal* name is the SON OF GOD: Now Christ is called the *Son of man*, not because he had a human father, for he had none: God only is the Father of Christ; but he is called the Son of man, as I apprehend, for this reason; because he took a human body, or because he was made flesh: for then, and not before, he was in a true and proper sense, MAN, a *perfect* man. A human spirit, without a human body, is not a true and perfect man; but both together,

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inseparably united, constitute a complete man. He is likewise called the Seed of Abraham, and the Son of David, according to the flesh; because God took a body for his Son, of one that descended from Abraham and David: yet neither Abraham nor David, but God only, was the proper Father of Christ: and, "as his brethren were partakers of flesh and blood, it behoved him in all things to be made like unto them; therefore he also took part of the same," Heb. ii. 14. Now when God had thus sent forth his Son, made of a woman; then the Word that was in the beginning with God, was made flesh. Why the Word that was with God, is also called God, we shall attempt to shew afterwards.

3. CHRIST, the Son of God, is also called the Word of God. This, I conceive, is a name of office, and given to Christ: 1. Because God the Father spake all things into being by his Son; by whom also he governs and upholds all things in a way of providence. 2. Because the Father not only hath made known his will to the church in all ages by him, as we declare our minds to one another by our words; but because he commands and performs all things for the church, in and by his Son; and hence, I humbly conceive, he is called the Word of God. The Father in his own person alone, without the Son, did not create, nor redeem the world, nor will by himself judge it at the last day; but he doth it in, and by his Son; and, as the works of God are all wrought according to his own will by a word of divine command, his Son *who speaks* the word, and *by whom* the FATHER *speaks in him*, is therefore called the Word of God. And thus, by the Word of Jehovah, were
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the heavens made, and all the hosts of them, by the Spirit of his mouth. "He spake, and it was done: he commanded, and they were created."

THE reason, then, of this name being given to Christ, if thus understood, is natural and proper. *John Baptist's* testimony of him, seems to imply this, when he said, "HE whom God hath sent *speaketh the words* of God, FOR, God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him:" and Christ himself, speaking to his own disciples, saith, "The words which I speak, I speak NOT of MYSELF, but the Father who dwelleth in me, HE doth the works;" and again he saith, "The words which you hear are not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

THUS, as I conceive, he plainly declares himself to be the Word of God, together with the reason of his bearing that name. The Father, in the Son, speaks by him; and the Son, as the Father's mouth and word, spake from him unto us: Thus God, who created all things by Jesus Christ, spake unto the church of old in the person of his Son; and when his Son was incarnate, the Father still dwelt in him, and spake, and wrought miracles by him; and by his mouth also will God the Father both raise the dead, and judge the world at the last day. Therefore Christ, the Son of God, is properly called, and is, *the WORD OF GOD*. Thus that scripture is fulfilled in him, where God said to *Moses*, "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and will put MY WORDS in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I command him: And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto MY WORDS which

which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him," Deut. xviii. 18, 19.

AGAIN: The glorious Son of God sustains and executes certain offices in, and for the church, to which also he is called and appointed of the Father; and with respect to these offices he bears several names.

1. HE is called an ANGEL, which is a name not of nature, but of office; and means a messenger, one sent of God, and employed by him to act under him, and for him, in whatsoever he wills and commands: to do which was the meat and drink of Christ, his only begotten Son, whose delight to do the Father's will proceeded from his supreme love to the Father; hence he saith, "I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy law is within my heart," Psalm xl. 8. And again, "That the world may know that I love the Father; as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do," John xiv. 31. God hath many angels, or servants, as he hath many Sons; but Christ, in a peculiar and eminent manner, is both the Son and angel of God; the EXPRESS IMAGE of God the Father, and the ANGEL OF HIS PRESENCE; which high characters are not given to any other son or angel of God, but to Christ only. As an angel he was sent of God to do his will, and execute his commands in the glorious work of man's redemption; and hence he is called God's *Servant*.

2. HE is called the MESSIAH, or *Christ of God*, i. e. the person whom he hath *anointed* and appointed to those high offices which he bears and sustains. This name *Christ* is intended to express his special appointment of God to the office of a Mediator and Saviour; to which office

office he was appointed of the Father, by the *sacred unction of the Holy Ghost*: the oil with which the high priests, prophets, and kings of old were anointed, was a type of this. But as all things are of God, no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was *Aaron*: so Christ glorified not himself to be made a High Priest, but he that said unto him, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Heb. v. 5. Now, for the due execution of this office, he was fitted and qualified by his personal union with Jehovah, and in that union, by communication of the gift of the eternal Spirit to him; which I take to be the meaning of that scripture, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; for the Spirit is life." Thus God anointed his Son *Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost, and with power*, who came down from heaven, *not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him*: And hence the Son of God is called Christ.

3. HE is called JESUS, which is a name of larger signification, and expressive of his general office in the work of man's salvation, for *Jesus* signifies a *Saviour*; so that the name *Jesus Christ*, by which he is generally called in scripture, is in plain language, the *anointed Saviour*.

THE three great and glorious offices of *prophet, priest, and king*, which he executes for his peoples' redemption and salvation, are all included in the name *Jesus*. This name then points him out to us, as coming into the flesh to save his people from their sins, through his vicarious obedience, atoning blood, and ever prevailing intercession
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for them, at the right hand of God ; where he is now exalted to be a prince and a Saviour.

4. CHRIST is also called a MEDIATOR, that is, a middle person between two parties at variance, whose office is to reconcile and make peace betwixt them. Now Christ, the Son of God, is this Mediator, or middle person, betwixt God and men, who, by his taking our flesh, and being at the same time in union with God, hath both natures, the human and divine, mysteriously united in himself ; yet in his proper person he is to be distinguished from both, for he was not constituted a person by taking a body of our flesh, nor by the Father's giving him to have life in himself : but as a proper person distinct from the Father, he receives that Spirit of life ; and as a proper person distinct from a human body, he assumed and was united to our flesh : By the latter, viz. his incarnation, he was capable of suffering for us in the flesh ; and by the former, viz. the Father's giving to him the fulness of the Spirit of life, he was able to quicken the dead, and put life into his redeemed people. Now Christ, as the Saviour of men, sustains the three offices above mentioned, which together comprehend whatsoever God had appointed, and Christ himself had engaged as a Mediator and Saviour to do for us : And to all and each of these offices, he was chosen, appointed, and anointed of God the Father. Wherefore he saith, " I have put my Spirit upon him, he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles," Isa. xlii. 1. And again, to the Son he saith, " Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore GOD, even THY GOD, hath

hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows," Psalm xlv. 7.

As a prophet he immediately enlightens the understanding, and teaches his people every divine truth, in time and measure, as he sees fit, by the *same divine Spirit, with which he himself is anointed without measure.*

As a priest, he suffered and atoned for their sins, when, by the *same eternal Spirit*, he offered himself without spot to God for the redemption of his people; and now, as such, he ever lives at the right hand of God to intercede for them: and, being filled with the seven spirits of God, he clearly sees, and perfectly knows, all things; which seven spirits of God are by him sent forth into all the earth, for the quickening, comforting, and filling the hearts of his people with every needful grace and gift of the Holy Ghost.

As a king, by the *same almighty Spirit*, he governs, rules, and protects his church, and also restrains, and subdues, and will at the last destroy all his and his peoples' enemies. "Therefore, also, he hath a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords, to which he is exalted of the Father, who hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church," Eph. i. 22. and, therefore, he hath commanded "that every knee should bow to him, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, head, and ruler of all, unto the glory of God the Father," Phil. ii. 10, 11. This glory and honor he promised him of old, saying, "My Servant shall be exalted, and be exalted, and be very high," Isa. lii. 13. and this glory was

to be a part of the reward of his sufferings, and therefore "we now see Jesus, for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honor," Heb. ii. 9. Thus "God hath made that *same Jesus of Nazareth*, who was crucified, both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36.

5. HE is called *the everlasting Father*, Isa. ix. 6. As this name is given to the SON, for he is the person all along spoken of in the text, it cannot be meant of him as a *divine person in the Godhead*; for so to understand it, would be to confound the *persons* of the *Father* and the *Son*, and make the Son himself to be the Father; which is manifestly absurd, and direct *Sabellianism*: for the scripture plainly declares, that the Father is not the Son, neither is the Son the Father. The text says, "To us a *Child* is born, to us a *Son* is given, and his name shall be called WONDERFUL," &c. These words, I think, plainly import, that the names, *Mighty God*, &c. are not essential to his person nor descriptive of it; but are names and characters which the child Jesus was to bear, and by which he should be called, either on account of his peculiar and most intimate union with God the Father, as dwelling and manifesting himself in him; or as he is constituted Head of the church, and filled with all the fulness of God, for the redemption and quickening of his people, and, perhaps, both may be included; and thus to understand the text is perfectly agreeable with what the apostles testify of Christ in the New Testament.

THE word *Everlasting Father*, according to the Seventy, may be rendered the *Father of the future ages*, or of the world to come; and, according to an able Critic in the Hebrew

language, *The Father of time onward, futurity, or eternity to come.* So that this seems to be the prophet's meaning, viz. that Christ should be made of God, the spiritual father of all his seed, a living head of influence to his church, a quickening Spirit; which interpretation seems also to agree with those scriptures where he is represented as presenting himself with all his church before God, and saying, "*Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me,*" Heb. ii. 13. for by whatever means or instruments the elect of God are regenerated and born again, Christ is the *immediate quickener* of their souls, through the Spirit. Hence, saith Paul, "*In Christ Jesus I have begotten you, through the gospel.*" And to the same church he saith, "*Ye are the epistle of Christ, ministered by us;*" and he shews how Christ wrote the truths of his gospel in their hearts, viz. "*By the Spirit of the living God:*" for Christ is filled with the Spirit for that purpose. St. Peter also testifies that believers are born again, "*not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible; even by the word of God which liveth, &c.*"

As Christ then receives all things immediately from the FATHER, as *his* HEAD; so the church receives all things immediately from Christ, as *their* HEAD: wherefore he saith, "*As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.*" Now because God the Father hath filled Christ his Son, with the Spirit of life, for the quickening and sanctifying of the church; therefore he is the author and finisher of our faith. And hence, I humbly conceive, he is called the Father of eternity to come, i. e. of eternal life to the whole

whole church of God, who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world to come, and the resurrection from the dead : " for this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son," 1 John v. 10.

6. CHRIST, the Son of God, is called IMMANUEL, i. e. God with us, whereby, I conceive, is meant, that the divine and human natures were united in Christ, or that the Father and Son are, by union, one; and consequently when Christ took flesh, the very and eternal God, who was in Christ, was manifested in flesh. Now, the body of Christ, as the temple of Jehovah, was prefigured, and typified by the tabernacle or temple under the law, and *this*, even the body of Christ, is the tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man : Thus JEHOVAH prepared a body for his Son, that the Father in the Son, and together with the Son, might dwell in it also. And hence we are told, that "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily," Col. ii. 9. Therefore, when the Word and Son of God was made flesh and dwelt among us, his name was called *Immanuel*, God with us, God manifested in flesh.

CHRIST, then, seems to be here spoken of as a *complex person*, by which I mean *two* distinct NATURES, and *two* distinct PERSONS united in *one* : for when Christ dwelt among us, and went about doing good, &c. "God was with him," saith the apostle *Peter* ; and *Paul* saith, "God was in him : " and he himself saith, "The Father dwelleth in me ; and he that sent me is with me." Hence, with propriety, his name is called IMMANUEL ; for seeing God was with Christ, when Christ was with us, God was with us also : for where Christ is, God is, and no where else :

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The Son must never be considered *alone* without the Father; though, as a person, he must be carefully distinguished from the Father; not *separated*, but distinguished only. And, I conceive, for this reason also, he is called the *mighty God* (if the words be justly translated, for I think they might be rendered the *strong mighty man*) because the mighty God, even the Father, was in union, and one with him. As he saith in another place, "Obey his voice, &c. for MY NAME is in him," Exod. xxiii. 31.

7. HE is called "JEHOVAH *our righteousness*," Jer. xxiii. 6. I take this also to be a complex name; but more seems to be meant by *this* name than by the name *Immanuel*, which expresses barely his incarnation and his union with God therein; signifying, that God the Father continued to dwell in him in his state of humiliation after he had taken flesh, as well as before: But his name, JEHOVAH *OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, comprehends likewise his being made under the law for men, fulfilling *all its righteousness*, and suffering its curse in our room and stead. And as he did this, not in a state of separation from God the Father, but in union with him, therefore he is called, *Jehovah our righteousness*; and, for this cause, *Christ*, who fulfilled the righteousness of the law for us, *is made of God unto us righteousness*, and we are *made the righteousness of God IN HIM*; now as the *man Christ*, whose name is the *Branch*, is also called *Jehovah our righteousness*, it seems to signify, that the Father and Son together are the *one Saviour* of the world; or as the apostle speaks, the *great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*, as if he had said, Jesus Christ, considered as *Immanuel*, and as *Jehovah our righteousness* (which includes
God

God the Father in him) is the great God and our Saviour : But when they are distinguished, then God the Father is said to save us by his Son; and the Son to save us by laying down his life, or giving himself for us, according to the will of God, and our Father. "Thus God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing to them their trespasses; for he hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21.

REMARKS.

I. WE may from hence observe, that the first man *Adam*, who is said to be created in the image of God, and is called the Son of God, was a figure of Christ, according to whose image he was undoubtedly formed; for Christ is the image of God; therefore when *Adam* was made in the image of God he was most certainly made after the image of Christ, who was the image of God before him. The scripture expressly declares, "that Christ is the FIRST BORN of every creature, and the FIRST BORN among many brethren;" but how could this be, if he had not an existence as the Son of God, and as begotten of him before *Adam* was created?

ADAM, indeed, is called the *first man*, and *CHRIST* the *Lord from heaven*, the *second*. This, I conceive, necessarily implies, that Christ existed as man, that is, his human spirit existed before his incarnation: how then, it may be said, is *Adam* called the first man? I apprehend, for this reason, because he was first clothed with a human body of flesh, but Christ had not a *body prepared for him* till several thousand

said years after. It seems also that the name *Adam* was given to the first man, because he was made, *as to his body*, of the dust of the ground: hence some observe, that *Adam* signifies *red earth*; and to this the apostle seems to refer, when he saith, “The first man is OF THE EARTH, *earthly*,” for else his *spiritual part* is not said to be made of the earth, but *breathed into him*: therefore Christ, as to his Spirit, was before *Adam*, and as to his body, was after him. In the same sense the *Baptist* is to be understood, when speaking of Christ, he saith, “After me cometh a MAN, which is preferred before me, for he *was before me*,” John i. 30. Now, as *Adam’s* being made in the image of God properly consisted in the rectitude of his rational soul, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness; so Christ in his holy soul, or as a pure Spirit, was a much more glorious image of God; wherefore the scripture, speaking of the first *Adam*, calls him the *image and glory of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 7. but of Christ he saith, “who is the *brightness of his glory*, and the *express image* of his person,” Heb. i. 3. It is also plain that *Adam* was created by Christ, for God created all things by Jesus Christ, therefore, when God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,” he spake, I doubt not, to his only begotten Son, who before all things was begotten of him, and was then with him, existing in his divine image, in all the glory and perfection of the divine likeness. And as the image of God in the first man, which he created by Jesus Christ, was lost by the fall, so this same image is again created of God by the same Jesus Christ, in all his re-
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generated people, and will be compleated in them both in soul and body at the resurrection, with additional and eternal glory.

2. IT appears from what hath been observed, that all the antient prophets and high priests, kings and rulers of God's people, who were chosen, called of God, and anointed to their respective offices, to teach his people the will and way of God, to offer sacrifices and prayers for them, to govern and rule over them; *prefigured Christ*, and were types of him in his several offices of a prophet, priest, and king. Christ, therefore, is the *great high priest*, over the house of God, the TRUE MELCHISEDEC, i. e. King of righteousness; the TRUE JOSHUA, i. e. Jesus, the Saviour; the TRUE DAVID, i. e. the beloved, his dear Son, whom God hath chosen, and established King in Zion. The name ELIJAH, i. e. *My God the essence*, and the name ELISHA, i. e. *My God the Saviour*, were probably given to those two great prophets, as typical of Christ, in whom the true God essentially dwells; in and by whom he made the worlds, in and by whom also he redeemed, and saves the world: And as it was a very different and far greater work to redeem men, than to create them; hence a double portion of *Jehovah's* Spirit seems to be necessary to carry his Son through the infinitely great and glorious work of man's redemption: and, perhaps, with respect to this mystery, *Elisba* asked to have a double portion of the spirit of *Elijah* to be poured upon him; for we know that the Spirit was given, and descended upon Christ at his baptism, that he might work the works of God among men, and not fail nor be discouraged until he had set judgment in the earth.

5. As we find in scripture that angels and magistrates, the kings and rulers of God's ancient people, are called *ALEIM*, i. e. God, or when meant of more than one, gods; which name seems to be given them plainly for these reasons, because they represented God, acted in his stead, and by authority and power received from him; and also because he put some of his glory upon them: Much more then is Christ the only begotten Son called God, who was the *ANGEL of his presence*, whom God the Father hath chosen and given to be the Saviour of men; and hath appointed him also to be the universal Lord and ruler of all creation, and the judge of all men; therefore, I say, with much greater propriety, is the only begotten Son, called *ALEIM*, God, as immediately representing and acting by the power and authority of God the Father, who also dwelleth in him: And, in this sense, I think, our Lord plainly applies it to himself, John x. 35, &c. "*If he called them gods to whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken) say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?*" To this also may be applied that in the *Psalms*: *Unto the Son* he saith, "*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre: Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*" These words are plainly spoken to the Son, as Man-Mediator, and as King in *Zion*, whose God the Father is, and by whom he was thus anointed. And this is so far from degrading, that it *highly exalts our Lord Jesus as King of kings,*

kings, and Lord of lords ; for we do not understand nor speak this of *supreme absolute Godhead*, with which he is filled, in union with the Father, and which personally is God the Father ; but here we speak of CHRIST as man, and Son of God in his own proper person : and, I doubt not, but thus to honor him, as *sent* of God, and *exalted* by him to be a prince and Saviour ; is to honor him even as we honor the Father, in whose name, and by whose authority he acts ; for he that honoreth the Son, as *sent* by the Father, honoreth the Father who sent him : besides, if angels, rulers, and judges in the church are called gods, and Christ is never, *as such*, so called, in distinction from God the Father ; then they seem to have the pre-eminence of Christ in this respect, which cannot be, for we know that Christ hath every exalted name GIVEN him, and that eminently above all others. And although the Father and the Son are, by the most intimate union, *one*, yet they remain *two* still. The two persons of the Father and the Son, one *begotten* and the other *unbegotten*, as well as the two natures, *human* and *divine*, are not at all mixed, or confounded together ; but remain perfectly distinct each from other. Therefore the Father did not suffer with the Son, though he was ever in union with him, and supported him ; neither did the Godhead bleed, though united to the manhood ; but the Son alone, in his own person, suffered, and in the flesh he was put to death for us ; and therefore the church ascribes her salvation to God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Holy Spirit.

AS the scripture, plainly and in exprefs terms, hath revealed Chrift to us, and testified that he is the Son of God; so I apprehend likewise that the Holy Spirit is there spoken of and represented to us by words plain and proper, and *easy to be understood*.

DIVINE revelation is doubtless adapted to the circumstances of the poor, and the capacities of the unlearned among men, to whom the gospel is preached, and by whom it is more generally received, and better understood, than by the wise and learned; who, by *their over-nice criticisms*, metaphysical art, and school learning, are apt to make distinctions without a difference, and render that dark and obscure, which before was plain and obvious: so that instead of edifying the unlearned, they rather perplex and corrupt their minds from the simplicity that is in Christ.

NOW by the SPIRIT of any thing, is commonly, and as I conceive, properly meant its *life* and *power* of action: The spirit is that which is *essential* to its proper being. *Take away the SPIRIT, and you take away the LIFE*: the body without the spirit is dead. Therefore spirit and life are synonymous terms; and, as such, they are both promiscuously used and understood in our common language, and also in
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the sacred scriptures, see Judges xv. 19. 1 Sam. xiii. 12. John vi. 63. Rom. viii. 10. Though some may distinguish between spirit and life, as between cause and effect; yet we have no idea of such a distinction, unless in its acting upon another substance: for the life is necessarily included in the spirit. And as life, so likewise *vital activity*, or a power of action, is essential to the spirit.

Now, by the spirit of an intelligent being, I understand, those *rational* and *active powers* which are essential to, and constitute the *life* of that being; whereby he is capable of acting with freedom, design, and understanding, both upon himself and others. And these are more or less perfect according to the kind or excellency of the subject to which they belong. Now in a rational creature, whose spirit is his life, whereby he wills and acts upon himself, as towards others: also, his spirit and power of action is circumscribed and *limited*: but God his creator is an infinite being, therefore his Spirit is infinite also: And if we may be allowed in this case to reason from analogy, as I think the scripture warrants, then, the Spirit of God is the *ESSENTIAL LIFE* and *POWER* of GOD. What God doth by his Spirit, he doth by his power; and what he doth by his power, he doth by his Spirit; nor is there any difference, as we here, by *power*, understand that which is *essential* to the divine nature, and not a *mere* transient *act* of divine power: nor can the Spirit be distinguished from God himself, but as in a way of operation it acts upon others; and hence, I conceive, that the Spirit of God and the essential power of God are sometimes used as terms synonymous. See Psalm xxxiii. 6. Jer. x. 12. and li. 15. Luke i. 35. Acts x. 38. 1 Cor. ii. 4. So the spirit of
life

life and the spirit of power, seems to mean the *living, powerful Spirit of God*, whereby he quickeneth and worketh all things; and this Spirit is essential to *Jehovah's* being. Therefore, as the spirit of man is man, so the Spirit of God is God; but as the spirit of man is not another man, nor another person distinct from himself; so neither may we say, that the Spirit of God is another God, or another person distinct from God. The spirit seems to be always included in the person whose spirit he is. *What is a man without his spirit?* To say of any one that he is a person, without including his spirit, seems to me an absurdity; and in truth to deny such a one to be a *proper person*, or an intelligent being, that lives, wills, &c. and to suppose his spirit to be another person, and, as such, distinct from him, is, I conceive, to make two persons of one.

I CONCEIVE then, that the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God the Father, and essentially included, and constantly abiding in his divine person, from whom also he proceeds, in a way of *gift*, and *operation*; and is first given to the only begotten Son, and then to the church by him. Therefore the Holy Ghost is not, as the *Arians* say, a creature, but of the same divine nature with God the Father, whose Spirit he is; for the spirit must be of the same nature with that person to whom he belongs, and from whom he proceeds. To say that the Spirit of God is a creature, seems to imply, that God himself is a creature, which is horrid blasphemy. For as the Holy Spirit proceeds from, and is the *SPIRIT of God*, as the scripture testifies, he cannot, I think, with reason or truth, be supposed to be a being of a different nature; and if not, then he is of *same divine essence*. I conceive

conceive also, that the Holy Spirit is not *another* divine person distinct from the Father. The arguments made use of to prove it, are, in my humble opinion, all of them built on human conjectures, and mere inferences; for the scripture no where plainly reveals and declares it to us; and how then should we know it? "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," 1 Cor. ii. 11.

It is enough for us to know, that he is the Spirit of God, by whom, through the Son of his love, God the Father works all our works, both in us, and for us. But I will briefly point out some of the arguments commonly made use of on this occasion, as the personal act of witnessing, &c.

1. THEN the act of witnessing ascribed to the Holy Ghost in 1 John v. 7. doth not prove him to be a proper person, for our Lord ascribes that act of witnessing to the very works which he did in his Father's name; and the apostle immediately after, in the very next verse, tells us of the three other testifiers that bare witness on earth: these are likewise called Three, and are said to bear witness also, as in the former verse; yet it is manifest they are not three persons, though the personal act of testifying is ascribed to each of them, yea, it is doubtful if either of them be a proper person. Therefore, if the *act of witnessing* proves a trinity of three distinct persons in the former verse, it doth the same in the latter; but it plainly doth not in the latter, therefore not in the former.

2. NEITHER do the application of the personal pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, prove the Holy Spirit

to be a distinct person, for they are often ascribed to that which is not a proper person; as to a man's soul in distinction from himself; and yet the soul of man is not another person, different from himself, as in Psalm xlii. 5, 11. and in other places. Now, if these personal pronouns do not prove a man's soul to be another person distinct from himself; so neither do they prove the Spirit of God to be another person distinct from God: for if a man, including his spirit, is not two or three persons, but one only; so God and his Spirit is not to be conceived of as two or more persons, but one only: for we are assured that God made man in his own image.

3. No personal actions, such as sending, being sent, speaking, &c. prove the Spirit of God to be another person distinct from God; for most, if not all of these things, are ascribed to the spirit of man, who yet is not another person, in distinction from himself. "*My spirit prayeth, saith Paul, my conscience witnesseth; I am absent in body, yet present in spirit.*" See 1 Cor. v. 3, 4. and Col. ii. 5. "*Went not my heart with thee?*" (saith *Elisha* to *Gebazi*.) If then these kind of personal acts prove the Holy Spirit to be another person distinct from the Father, they seem equally to prove that a man's heart, conscience, and spirit, is another person distinct from himself; but the latter cannot be admitted with propriety, therefore not the former.

4. From this way of reasoning to prove the divine personality of the Holy Spirit, it may, I think, be proved that the Holy Ghost is *seven* distinct persons or spirits; for we read expressly of the *seven* spirits of God, which are represented by the emblems of *seven* distinct lamps of fire, and by *seven* eyes; and they are said to be sent forth into all

all the earth ; but as this cannot be understood properly of seven distinct spirits, or seven divine persons ; but to mean only the variety and perfection of powers, gifts, and graces of the one eternal Spirit of God ; so neither may we understand the Holy Ghost to be another divine person, distinct from God. In the parable of the dry bones we read of "*four winds coming, and breathing on the slain that the prophet saw in vision,*" but we are not to conceive from thence that they are *properly* four winds, but *one*, that blows from the *four quarters*, viz. from the *east, west, north, and south*, and hence called *four*.

AGAIN: God is represented to us as a person having a Spirit essential to his being, which we are taught to conceive of by *analogy*, i. e. as *man*, whom God created in his own image, is one person, and *hath a spirit in him, essential to his being* ; so *God*, his creator, is one person, and *hath a Spirit essential to his divine being* : therefore also it is the same thing, to have God dwelling, or his Spirit dwelling in us ; for by his Spirit he himself dwelleth in us. There is indeed a proper distinction between the person of Christ, and the Holy Spirit, because he is *originally* and essentially the Spirit of the Father *only*, and is by him *given* to the Son ; but as the Son is personally united to the Father, and the appointed head of the church, he, in that union with God, and as the church's head, is filled with the Spirit by the Father, for his body's sake the church : and therefore the Holy Spirit may, with propriety, be called *another Comforter*, in distinction from Christ ; for the scripture testifies, that Christ received the Spirit from the Father.

It is also admitted that the distinctions in JEHOVAH may reasonably be supposed, to be far greater than in man, his created image; and therefore if there be such a wonderful diversity, or distinction in one man, that he may speak to, and of his rational soul, or spirit, &c. as though in *appearance* he were really another distinct person; much more may *such modes of speech* be conceived of, and allowed, as fitting, and proper to be used by the infinitely perfect and ever blessed God, without making God and his Spirit to be *two* persons. Further, it is indisputably manifest that the Holy Spirit is generally spoken of in scripture as the Spirit of God, in the same manner as when we speak of a man's spirit, we say the spirit of man. So that if we meet with two or three modes of speech in scripture representing and speaking of the Holy Ghost in a manner *seemingly* different; it is, I think, neither just nor proper to put such a sense upon them, as must evidently contradict the *obvious* meaning of those many scriptures where the Holy Ghost is plainly spoken of, as the real and *proper* Spirit of God. Hence I infer, that a *spiritual being*, as God is, and *his* Spirit, are not *two* persons, but *one* only.

THEREFORE these and such like arguments, which are usually brought to prove the divine Spirit to be another person, distinct in the Godhead from the Father, appear to me far fetched, doubtful, and inconclusive. All that they prove, I think, is this, which we also believe and allow, viz.

1. THAT the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God, of the same nature, and essential to the divine being.

2. THAT God, by his infinite and eternal Spirit, which is essential to him, created and governs the world;
redeemd,

redeemed, quickens, sanctifies, and saves his people in, and by the person of his Son Jesus Christ.

3. THAT all the *acts* of the Holy Ghost are all *personal* and all *divine*; and that it is ever proper to speak of him as acting personally, and as a divine intelligent agent, without making him *another person* distinct from God the Father. Therefore, when the Holy Ghost speaks or sends, God himself, even the Father, speaks or sends, for God doth all things by his Spirit; and when the Holy Ghost is blasphemed, God is blasphemed. Therefore,

4. To contend about the distinct personality of the Holy Spirit cannot be for God's glory, or the church's good: seeing his divine nature, work, and influences on the souls of men, are stedfastly believed by us; and where these are admitted, to insist upon it, that he is a *distinct person* in the essence, and to be contentious about it, is, in my humble opinion, *striving about words to no profit*. It is enough for believers to know that they are born again, renewed and led by that Holy Spirit of God; and that "Christ is in them the hope of glory, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. To whom be glory and dominion for ever, Amen."

REFLECTION.

How manifest is this truth, that "all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, through whom also he quickens and sanctifies us by the Spirit."

O MY soul, seek above all things to understand and experience this great salvation of God! and leave others

to strive about words that cannot profit themselves, or those that hear them.

LET the love of God the Father, in giving his Son Jesus Christ; and of Christ in laying down his life for thee, revealed and applied with power by the Holy Ghost, be more earnestly desired, and more diligently sought after, than any curious or nice speculations about the *modus* of the ever blessed God's subsisting in his own pure Deity: seeing he hath not been pleased to reveal it to us; but this, in his word, he hath plainly declared, that he is *ONE only*, and that there is no God besides him.

LET it suffice thee to know, by divine teaching, that Christ hath redeemed thee unto God by his blood, that thy sins are forgiven for his name's sake, that God is thy God and Father, by faith in Christ Jesus, that thou art born again of the Spirit, and by him art taught and enabled "to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." This will gladden thy heart, and fill thee with those holy joys which are peculiar to the regenerate and chosen of God. This will cause thee to rejoice in assured hope of the glory of God, whilst the disputers of this world, with all their boasted learning and sophistry, are amusing themselves with vain speculations, and feeding on the chaff of empty notions. Yea, this shall be a *real* evidence to thy own soul, and enable thee to give *sufficient* evidence to all others, that thy faith is the faith of God's elect, thy hope the hope of the gospel; and that it is the true grace of God which thou hast received, and wherein thy soul is established.

C H A P. V.

Of CHRIST'S Pre-existence.

THAT Christ had a proper personal existence previous to his incarnation, is, I think, plainly declared in scripture, and is, I suppose, universally acknowledged by all christians, except by *Socinians* only. But christians are not so generally agreed as to the nature of that existence which he then had: Some suppose that nothing of Christ existed before he took flesh, but his pure *Deity only*; others there are who believe that Christ's *human soul* existed in union with the Godhead, before he came into the world: And, I humbly conceive, that the sentiment of those, in this particular, is just and true; and that they are well supported in the belief of it, both from the express words, and plain sense of scripture.

THAT Christ did really exist with God, and that as a *human spirit* before he actually took flesh, I shall endeavor to make appear from the following considerations:

1. THE scripture speaks of Christ as existing before all creation, and that as a *person distinct* from God, and as being

being *with* God : And, as we are assured there is but one living and true God, *he* that was *with* him, cannot, in his own distinct person, be also the living God ; for then there would be *two gods* : but the scripture saith, There is but *one* ; and as we read of but two natures in Christ, viz. the human and divine ; and that he existed before the world was, it must necessarily be understood, that, as a person, he existed in one of these natures ; but not in the divine nature, as a *person distinct* from God, for the reason above given : therefore he existed as a person in his human nature, i. e. as a pure human spirit, for he had not then a human body. Moreover, this human spirit of Christ was, I conceive, the first begotten and image of God ; and this I ground upon such scriptures as these ; “ In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was *with* GOD ; the *same* was in the beginning *with* GOD,” John i. 1. “ We have seen and shew unto you, that *eternal life* which was *with* the Father, and was manifested unto us,” 1 John i. 2. “ JEHOVAH, saith he, *possessed* ME (*in**) the BEGINNING of his way, before his works of old—when there were no depths I was BROUGHT FORTH—before the hills was I BROUGHT FORTH,” Prov. viii. 22, 24, 25. “ Who is the IMAGE of the INVISIBLE GOD, the *first born* of every creature,” Col. i. 15. “ The beginning of the creation of God,” Rev. iii. 14.

Now these scriptures seem plainly to declare that Christ the Son of God was begotten by him, and existed with God the Father as a person distinct from him ; and in a nature inferior to Godhead, before the world was. Surely

* The particle *in* is not in the original.

those expressions, where he is called the *image* of God; the *first born* of every creature; and the *beginning* of the *creation* of God, &c. cannot be easily understood of Christ *œconomically*, i. e. as denoting his appointment to an office, in the *œconomy* of redemption; for the words only declare his glorious generation and existence with the Father, before the world was, without so much as hinting any thing with regard to his office character; that indeed is often and plainly spoken of in other scriptures, but not in these; nor can they be intended to declare his *future* generation in the flesh: for no words can be more plain and full to express his *actual*, and *proper* generation before all creation: much less can they be understood as descriptive of *Jehovah* himself, considered as a *self-existent* person in the Godhead; and yet one or other of these senses must be put upon the words; if we do not admit Christ to be brought forth, and actually existing before the world, as a being distinct from *Jehovah*, and also in a nature inferior to pure Deity: I infer therefore, that the most plain and natural sense of *those* and such like scriptures is, that as a *human spirit* he was begotten in eternity, and existed in, and with God; for whom in the fulness of time God also prepared a human body *fitted** to his human spirit, Heb. x. 5. Thus we are expressly told that Christ, as the Word, was in the beginning *with* God; therefore he certainly existed as *another being*, *distinct* from God; else how could he be said to be *with* God? For we never read, nor can we understand, how God can be said to be with himself: besides, the apostle is exceeding careful to pre-

* κατηρτισεν

serve this distinction, for having declared first that the *Word* was *with* God; and then said, *that the Word was* God; he immediately adds again, lest we should mistake his meaning, *This same*; viz. the *Word*, was in the beginning *with* God: *therefore God had one with him in the beginning, who is to be distinguished from him.*

OBJECTION. But the apostle declares that he was God.

ANSWER. True; he doth so; but he doth not say, that he was a person IN the Godhead; nor a divine person, co-essential with the Father; neither doth he say, that *as* God, he was *with* God: but *as the Word*, he was *with* God. Therefore, when he calls the Word, God; he evidently means it, not in the same sense as when he calls the Father God, but in some other respect, i. e. either as being his express image, or as one in personal union with God, in whom the Father dwells: if it be said that Christ, as the Word, that was with God, and who, as such, is distinguished from God, was also absolutely God in a proper sense; this, I think, would be plainly saying, that there are *two* gods, if words can at all express it: but the scripture declares, there is but one God, even the Father; and the apostle, in this very text doth, with great care, evidently distinguish the *word* that was with God, from that *one* God, with whom he was; therefore, when he saith, that the *word* was God, it is most rational and just; and, I conceive, necessary to understand it as above, i. e. either as the Word is the express image and representative of God, and so bears his name; or else because GOD the FATHER is PERSONALLY united to him, and dwelleth in him, by
which

which union the *whole* Godhead dwells (and is made visible) in Christ. Therefore, in the scriptures above mentioned, he is said to be “the *beginning* of the creation of God; the *first born* of every creature:” and, as such, he is the *image* of the INVISIBLE GOD; not the image of a *person* existing in God, but the image of GOD HIMSELF, *personally* subsisting in, and comprehending all the fulness of the *divine nature*.

THESE scriptural expressions are all plain and proper, if we understand them of a person existing with God before the world was, and as begotten of him, and dependent on him: And, in my humble opinion, they cannot, with reason and truth, have any other meaning put upon them. But why may we not suppose that the human soul of Christ was brought forth, and existed, previous to its union with a human body? Ought he not to precede all creatures, and have the pre-eminence in his glorious human spirit, as well as in his glorified human body? And why should it be thought incredible, that God should create all things by the man Christ Jesus, as well as redeem, and judge the world by him?

To me it seems both rational, scriptural, and necessary, that the same person, by whom God redeemed and will judge the world, should be the very same person by whom he created it; and we are certain, that he redeemed and will judge the world by *that man* CHRIST JESUS, whom he raised from the dead.

2. The scripture speaks of Christ, not only as existing, but as acting also, (not only in the works of creation, but for the quickening also, and turning of sinners to God, and

for the protecting of his church, and the destroying of their enemies long) before his incarnation : in many instances he is represented as appearing in the character of a person inferior to God, and as sent by him, tho' ever in union with God, and as one with him. He is said to preach by his Spirit unto the old world ; to wrestle as a man with *Jacob*, to bless and protect him ; and as an angel he redeemed him from all evil. JEHOVAH sent this same person, even CHRIST, as *his angel* before the church in the wilderness ; as such, he appeared to *Moses* in the bush : As a *man*, he appeared to *Jeshua* with a sword drawn in his hand ; and he himself declared that he was come as *captain* of JEHOVAH's host. And who is the *captain* of JEHOVAH's host, but the man Christ Jesus, who in the days of his flesh was made perfect through sufferings ? This angel also is plainly distinguished from JEHOVAH who sent him to be a *leader* and *commander* of his people : yet he speaks in such language as makes it plain that he was not alone, but JEHOVAH was *in him* : when, therefore, the angel said to *Moses*, " I am JEHOVAH, the God of *Abraham*," &c. they were the words of God the Father speaking in Christ, who is the *angel of HIS presence* ; and not the words of the Son alone, without the Father. This is plain from Numb. xx. 16. and Acts vii. 35. and also from what himself saith in the New Testament, where his language is the very same after his incarnation, as before : " The *Father*, saith he, that *sent me*, is *with me* : " and again, " The *words* which you hear, are NOT MINE but the FATHER's : *which sent me*."

AND

AND is it not plain from hence that Christ was a Mediator, and did, as such, act for his church, and towards it, by the appointment and with the authority of God the Father, long before his incarnation?

UNDERSTANDING, then, Christ to have existed in his human spirit, previous to his taking flesh, there is a manifest propriety in all that he is said to do for his people as God's angel, or messenger, and as the Mediator of the church and captain of their salvation; before he took a human body; but it seems to me hardly possible to put any tolerable sense on those scriptures where he is thus spoken of as the angel of God, &c. without admitting the pre-existence of his human spirit.

3. CHRIST himself testifies that he was sent and came down from heaven; and that he came not to do his own, but his Father's will. Can this be meant of absolute Deity, or of a divine person essentially subsisting in the Godhead? Is it possible so to understand it, without undei-fying Deity itself? for here are *two persons* with *two distinct wills*, and the one seems plainly to be inferior to, and the servant of the other; but surely there are not two wills in the Godhead, and one inferior to the other; neither can we suppose *Jehovah* in one person to be a servant to *Jehovah* in another. The scripture, I think, never so represents it, in any instance whatever: but if we understand it of Christ as man and mediator, it is both proper and intelligible; and that the distinction is the same in this passage, as where he saith, "Father, not my will, but thine be done," is, I think, manifest: Besides, our Lord seems to mention his being sent of the Father,

as that which justified his coming, and was the honor and glory of his mission. "I came not of myself, saith he, but *He* (the Father) sent me." John viii. 28, 42. Thus Christ, the HOLY ONE of God, glorified not himself to be made a high priest.—And thus God the Father sent forth his Son made of a woman, &c. and hence Christ, the second *Adam*, is called. "the Lord from heaven."

4. WE conceive that Christ existed in his human spirit previous to his incarnation, because our Lord speaks of himself as the Son of man that came down from heaven, "*No man*, saith he, hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the *Son of man*;" John iii. 13. and again, What, and if ye shall see the *Son of man ascend up WHERE HE WAS BEFORE*. John vi. 62. Is it not plain from these scriptures that Christ, as the Son of man, was in heaven, before he came into this world, and that he truly and properly came down from heaven? but he took flesh of the virgin *Mary*, therefore he pre-existed not in a human body, but as a human spirit only. Some, perhaps, may think it an objection to this sense of the first cited passage, because Christ also saith, that he was in heaven at the same time that he dwelt on the earth. To this I answer, as a learned critic observes, That the words may be rendered in the *past* tense, who *was* in heaven. The very same words *are* so rendered, and must certainly be so understood in John xii. 47. And it is certain, in many places, that one tense is put for another, as the past for the present, &c. besides, in John vi. 62. above cited, our Lord speaks thus in plain terms, "If ye shall see the Son of man ascend up *WHERE HE WAS BEFORE*;" wherefore it seems not improper to understand

derstand the first text in the same sense as the last, and that the last may well be understood to explain the first; for one scripture usually explains another.

Is it not then sufficiently clear that the Son of man was in heaven before he came into the world?

5. THE scripture testifies that "Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Now, if Christ's human spirit did not pre-exist, it seems to me, that he cannot be said to be the same yesterday, &c. but if his Spirit did pre-exist, then the text is clear, and he is the very same person, the anointed of *Jehovah*, and Son of God, and Saviour of men, in every age of the world; his taking a body of flesh, added nothing to his proper person, though he is now inseparably united to it, which is as a clothing to his human spirit, or a tabernacle for him to dwell in. This point also is further clear from Eph. iv. 8, 9. where the apostle speaks thus; "Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the *lower parts* of the earth? (Can this be meant of Deity?) and *he* that *descended is the same also that ascended up*, far above all heavens." But it is certain that the man Christ Jesus ascended, &c. therefore, it is equally clear that the man Christ descended first; nor can it, I think, be else proved, nor understood, how he that descended should be *the same* that ascended, &c. Therefore I infer, that "*this same Jesus*, which is taken up into heaven, did first come down from heaven, and shall come again in like manner, as the apostles saw him go into heaven," Acts i. 11.

6. HE is said to *empty* himself, Phil. ii. 7. which, I think, cannot with propriety or truth be understood of a divine

divine person in the Godhead, for how the immutable God can empty himself, be made in the likeness of a man, and become a servant, is hard to be understood ; much less can it be imagined or believed, that he was obedient unto death, &c. but this language is proper when applied to the man Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who, before his incarnation, existed with the Father, and was *in the form of God* : besides, he is here proposed to us as a pattern of humility, which, I conceive, is only proper to the man Christ Jesus. In the same sense HE, even Christ, that was rich, in the form and glory of God his Father, is said "to become poor, that we through his poverty might be rich." But the essential Godhead can in no sense become poor, nor undergo any change whatever : therefore these scriptures are applicable to the *man Christ* only, who suffered a real *change*, and became poor indeed, when he left his Father's bosom, took flesh, and died for us.

7. I CONCEIVE that when Christ came into the world, he only took a body of human flesh, and consequently that he pre-existed in his human spirit ; for it is observable that he is never said to take a human soul, but flesh only ; and we likewise find that he calls God his God, before his actual incarnation, which cannot be applied to a divine, but to a human person only ; for one person in the Godhead cannot be the God of another ; no, not *æconomically* : therefore it must be understood of his human spirit, for which, in the fulness of time, God prepared him a body. And this seems to me plain from these scriptures. When he cometh into the world, he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a *body* hast thou prepared me."

"Lo,

"Lo, I come to do thy will, O my God!" Psalm xl. 8. "The word was *made flesh*," John i. 14. "God sent forth his Son *made of a woman*," Gal. iv. 4. "Made of the Seed of *David* according to the *flesh*," Rom. i. 3. "What, is man that thou art mindful of him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels," "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death, &c. crowned with glory and honor." "Both *he* that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, *are all of one*," &c. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, *he also, himself*, likewise took part of the same; wherefore, *in all things*, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren," &c. Heb. ii. 6, 17.

OBJECTION. The scripture often by flesh means the whole man, including body and soul both.

ANSWER 1. For the most part it means the body only, and, as in all those scriptures where Christ is spoken of as coming into the world, there is not so much as one that speaks of his taking a human spirit, but only of his taking flesh; it seems most natural and proper to understand it in a restrained sense, i. e. to express a human body which Christ had prepared for him.

ANSW. 2. The reasons given by the apostle in the above scripture for Christ's taking flesh, are most properly understood of the *body of his flesh* in distinction from his rational soul; for he took a body that he might be capable of suffering death, &c. and because the *children* were *partakers* of flesh and blood; plainly implying that he had a rational soul in common with them before; but
not

not a human body, which therefore he assumed; because
 "it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his
 brethren."

ANSW. 3. When the scripture calls man, *flesh*, including
 both his body and soul, I suppose, that it always means and
 speaks of man as fallen and *corrupted*: therefore this can
 never with propriety and truth be applied to the man Christ
 Jesus, who was sinless and without corruption; conse-
 quently it means his body only, and therefore his Spirit
 pre-existed.

8. HE prays to the Father "to glorify him with the glory
 which he had with him before the world was;" and, as
 this was the prayer of the man Christ, so it must respect
 his human, not his divine nature: And this is further
 manifest, because it is a glory which the saints are capable,
 though in a less degree, of inheriting with himself;
 wherefore he saith, "The glory which thou gavest me, I
 have given them." And the apostle expressly declares,
 that Jesus, "for the sufferings of death, is crowned with
 glory and honor;" therefore it cannot be understood in a
figurative sense, as only *declarative* of the glory of his
 Godhead: for this, I think, would make the apostle's
 words to mean just nothing; and our Lord's also, when he
 saith, "The glory which thou hast given me, I have
 given them." And if those scriptures are not to be un-
 derstood properly, I conceive we cannot understand them
 at all.

9. WHEN he was upon the cross, he speaks only of his
 Spirit, which, with his expiring breath, he committed into
 the hands of his Father: And that this must be under-
 stood

stood of his human spirit, is clear, for he could not be said to commit a divine person in the Godhead to his Father.

THUS Jesus Christ *came from God*, and *went to God* as the scripture has in plain language very expressly and constantly declared.

10. THIS *is the person* who, in a proper sense, God hath highly exalted, and hath given him a name that is above every name, &c. "God, saith *Peter*, raised him from the dead, and gave him glory: and as this was the act of God the Father, therefore the faith and hope of all believers on Jesus is said to be, faith in God," 1 Pet. i. 21. And that this is the sense of all the prophets and apostles concerning Christ is, I think, abundantly manifest; which in brief may be declared in these words of the apostle. "*David* speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand that I should not be moved," &c. Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, "that of the fruit of his loins according to the *flesh*, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;" he seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that *his soul* was not left in hell, neither did *his flesh* see corruption. "*This Jesus* hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses: therefore being by the right hand of God, exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear. Therefore let all the house of *Israel* know assuredly, that God hath made that *same Jesus* whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 32, 36.

REFLECTION.

THUS we have attempted to shew from the scriptures, that Christ, as to his human soul, was in a strict and proper sense the first born of every creature ; therefore he hath in all things the pre-eminence, and is the first born among many brethren ; not only as the first begotten from the dead, but as the first begotten of God, by whom he was brought forth, and with whom he was in the beginning, before the heaven or the earth were created : That as the first and only begotten of the Father he is the fairest, fullest, and most perfect copy, pattern and image of the invisible God, being the brightness of his glory, and the *express image* of his person, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds : That the first *Adam* was made in his image, and after his likeness, and therefore he also is called the Son of God, being made in the image of Christ, who is the most glorious and *express image* of God. As to the *flesh*, *Adam* the first was before Christ : but as to his spirit, Christ was before him. In which sense, I conceive, *John the Baptist*, is to be understood, when he said, “ After me cometh a man, who is preferred before me ; for he was before me,” John i. 30. This is that glorious person, even Jesus the Son of God (who was, and is in the bosom of the Father) whom God the Father called to be his servant, and sent into the world to save sinners ; and for this purpose he prepared him a body : for as man had sinned in the flesh, it was necessary that sin should be condemned in the flesh ; wherefore God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin condemned sin in the flesh : And when this
glorious

glorious Son of God, the only Mediator between God and men, had, through death, purged our sins, and reconciled us unto God; God the Father raised him again from the dead; and exalted him, with his own right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour; and hath *commanded every knee to bow to him*, and that every tongue should confess, that *Jesus Christ is Lord, unto the glory of God the Father.*" Therefore we are commanded, and do, with heart and voice, ascribe our whole salvation unto God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.

DR. WATTS, in a large treatise on the subject, has, I think, set this point in a clear light, from whence I have made the following extract to the end of this chapter.

"CHRIST, when he came into this world, is said to empty and divest himself of some glory which he had before his incarnation, in several places of scripture. Now if nothing but his divine nature existed before this time, this divine nature could not properly empty or divest itself of any glory: Therefore it must be his inferior nature, or his human soul, which did then exist and divest itself of its ancient glory for a season.

THE first text I shall mention, is that famous one in the prayer of Christ, John xvii. 4, 5. "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine ownself, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." It seems very plain from these words, that Christ parted with some glory which he had in heaven, when he came down to finish the work which God gave him to do on earth, and he prays to be restored

to it again. I appeal to every reader, whether this is not the most obvious and natural sense? Now the glory which belongs to God, is either essential or manifestative. The divine nature of Christ could not lose or part with any essential glories; for they are the very nature and essence of God; nor had the divine nature any manifestative glories before the world was, which it lost at the incarnation*.

BUT how easy, plain, and obvious is the sense of these words, if we suppose the soul of our Lord Jesus Christ to be the first born of every creature, as Col. i. 15. and thus to enjoy real glory and dignity in the Father's presence before the world was, as well as in all following ages, until he emptied himself of it at his incarnation? And then he prays thus, "Father, I have finished the work on earth, which thou gavest me to do in my state of humiliation here; and now, O Father, take me to thyself in heaven, where I once was, and glorify me with the real glory which I had there before the creation: My days of appointed abasement are past, therefore let the power, splendor, and dignity, which I possessed in thy presence before the world was, be restored to me."

THE words (*with thine ownself*) in our Saviour's prayer, seem to determine it to be a real glory which he once had in God's own presence. This seems so evidently to be the sense and meaning of our Lord in his prayer, that if persons were not unacquainted with this doctrine of the

* Dr. Watts on the early existence of Christ's human soul. p. 157, &c. to p. 254. To avoid repeated references, I have mentioned only the first and last pages whence the extracts are taken; yet I have not taken the whole, but only here and there a part of what is contained in them.

pre-existence of the soul of Christ ; or if they had not some prejudice against it, one would think that every reader should naturally and necessarily take it in this sense.

THE second scripture I shall cite for this purpose, to shew that some things inferior to Godhead are ascribed to Christ, before and at his incarnation, is in Phil. ii. 5, 6, 7. " Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, ver. 6. who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, ver. 7. but made himself of no reputation (*καὶ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωκεν*, which is more exactly translated, *he emptied himself*) and took upon him the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men," as it is in the *Greek*, *ἐν ὁμοιωματί αὐθρῶπων γένεταί.*

HERE the apostle's design is to set Christ before them as a pattern of humility ; and this he doth by aggrandizing his former state and circumstances, and representing how he emptied himself of them, and appeared on earth in a very mean and low estate. Therefore, he saith, " Who, being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God," i. e. his human soul, which is the chief part of the man, being in union with his Godhead, was vested with God-like form and glory in all former ages : Thus he oftentimes appeared to the patriarchs, as the angel of the Lord, and as God or Jehovah, with a heavenly brightness about him, or clothed with the divine *Shekinah*, the robe of light, and spake and acted like God himself. This seems to be the form of God, which the apostle speaks of ; nor did he think it any robbery or sinful presumption so to do, i. e. to appear and act as God, since

since he was united to the divine nature, and was in that sense one with God : yet he emptied himself, i. e. he divested himself of this God-like form or appearance, this divine *Shekinah* ; and, coming into flesh, he consented to be made in the likeness of other men ; nay, he took upon him the form of a servant instead of the form of a God, i. e. instead of the glorious vestment of light, in which he once appeared and acted as God, he now came in a mean servile form, and humbled himself even to death, &c. as it follows.

Now that this text is most naturally interpreted, concerning the pre-existent soul of Christ and its humiliation, and not concerning the abasement of his divine nature, will appear, if we attend to these things :

1. It is the chief design of this scripture to propose to the *Philippians* a wondrous example of humility and self-denial. Now a great and pious writer of this age has observed, that we never find the divine nature or Godhead propounded to us, as an example of self-denial or humility in all the bible ; though God commands our conformity to himself, in holiness, love, and beneficence. Therefore it must be some inferior nature, or Christ's human soul is proposed as an example of humility and self-denial ; and a glorious example it was, when it divested itself of such a God-like form, and such a pre-existent glory.

2. CHRIST's being in the form of God cannot here necessarily signify his Godhead, because it is represented as inconsistent with the state of his humiliation ; for he seems to put off this form of God, or he emptied himself
of

of it, and put on the opposite form, viz. the form of a servant, when he became incarnate, or was made in the likeness of men. But it is plain that he could not put off his Godhead when he became incarnate; therefore it must refer to his human soul, which was in the form of God, or which made these God-like appearances before his incarnation, and he put off this divine form, when he took on him the fashion of a man, and the form of a servant.

BESIDES, the form of God can never be proved to signify his divine nature in this place; for there is no expression like it in scripture, that signifies proper divinity. Nor indeed does *μορφή* properly signify nature or essence any where in the bible, that I can find, but only appearance, shape, or likeness.

3. CONSIDER further, it seems to be that same nature emptied itself, which was afterwards filled with glory as a recompense; and it is the same nature that is said to humble itself, which was afterwards highly exalted by God. Now this was not the divine nature of Christ, but the human; therefore it must be the human nature of Christ that emptied itself in this text: because it appears very incongruous for the apostle to say, that the divine nature emptied and debased itself, and that the human nature was exalted as a recompense of this abasement.

“ You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be made rich.”
2 Cor. viii. 9.

I KNOW

I KNOW not how this can be interpreted any other way, than by supposing our Lord Jesus Christ as man, or his human soul to pre-exist in a former state, wherein he was rich indeed, and endowed with many real glories and privileges; and yet he divested himself of them, and became poor for our sakes, when he became incarnate, a helpless infant, who lay in a manger, and was the son of a carpenter.

IT cannot be said of God, or the divine nature, that he became poor, who is infinitely self-sufficient, and who is necessarily and eternally rich in perfections and glories, and in the indefeasible possession of all things: Nor can it be said of Christ as man, that he ever was rich, if he were never in a richer state before than while he was here on earth: for during that time he was always extremely poor, "the Son of man had not where to lay his head:" And he could not be in a richer state as man before, if nothing of this manhood existed before his incarnation.

BUT if to evade this any one will say, that he was rich as God, and became poor as man, Bishop *Fowler* answers, that this is "such a strain and force upon the words of scripture, that it looks like laying hold upon any thing to help at a dead lift."

IT appears then that our Lord Jesus Christ really emptied himself of some peculiar glories that belonged to him, and which he possessed in a pre-existent state before he came to dwell in our world, and to take flesh upon him.

IT seems needful that the soul of Christ should be pre-existent, that it might have opportunity to give its previous
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actual consent to the great and painful undertaking of atonement for our sins.

IT was the human soul of Christ that endured all the weakness, poverty, and pain of his infant state; that sustained all the labors and fatigues of life; that felt the bitter reproaches of men, and the sufferings of a shameful and bloody death, as well as the buffetings of devils, the painful inflictions of the justice of God. This is evident, for neither the divine nature, nor the mere flesh or body, abstractedly considered, are capable of pain or shame, without the human soul. Surely then it seems to be requisite that the soul of Christ should give its actual free consent to this undertaking before his labors, pains, or sorrows began, which was as soon as ever he was born.

ONE cannot but think it very congruous and highly reasonable, that he who was to undergo so much for our sakes, should not be taken from his childhood in a mere passive manner, into this difficult and tremendous work, and afterwards only give his consent to it when he was grown up a man, upon a sacred divine intimation that he was born to this purpose. It looks most likely and condecant in respect of the nature of things, and the justice of God, that Christ's human soul, which endured all the pains, should well know beforehand what the glorious work of mediation would cost him, and that he should voluntarily accept the proposal from the Father; otherwise it rather seems a task imposed upon him, than an original and voluntary engagement of his own; whereas such an imposition would seem to diminish the merit and glory of

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this noble undertaking, and is also contrary to scripture in itself.

BUT if we suppose the human soul (united to the divine nature at its first creation, and being thereby fully capacitated for this amazing work) receiving the proposal with cheerfulness from God his Father from the foundation of the world; and then, from an inward delight to glorify his Father, and from a compassionate principle to the children of men, undertaking this difficult and bloody service, and coming down into a human body to fulfil it; this highly exalts the merit of his love, and the condescending glory of his labours and his sufferings.

AND indeed this voluntary consent of his to become incarnate and to suffer, is plainly represented in several places of scripture. Psalm xl. 6, 7. Heb. x. 5. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, these were not sufficient to expiate the sin of man: Thou hast prepared a body for me; then said I, Lo, I come, i. e. to dwell in this body, to undertake this work: I delight to do thy will, O my God."

HIS own free consent appears plainly in these words, "He humbled himself," Phil. ii. He emptied himself of glory when he became man, and died for sinners. And he himself took part of flesh and blood, with this design, that he might die; that he might, through his death, destroy the works of the devil, Heb. ii. 14. He declares further his own free consent, John vi. 38. "I came down from heaven to do my Father's will." And John x. 17, 18. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh.

taketh my life from me, that is, against my free consent : but I lay it down myself," that is, of my own choice and voluntary engagement. " This thought I propose (says the defender of bishop *Powder's* discourse) to be well considered by all free and ingenuous minds, and by all those who would not in the least derogate from the honor of their blessed Mediator Christ Jesus," and the amazing love that appears in his mighty undertaking.

THE covenant betwixt God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ, for the redemption of mankind, is represented in scripture as being made and agreed upon from or before the foundation of the world. Is it not then most proper that both real parties should be actually present, and that this should not be transacted merely within the divine essence, by such sort of distinct personalities as have no distinct mind and will? The essence of God is generally agreed by our Protestant divines to be the same single numerical essence in all three personalities, and therefore it can be but one conscious mind or spirit. Now can one single understanding and will make such a covenant as scripture represents? Does it not add a lustre and glory, and more conspicuous equity, to this covenant, to suppose the man Christ Jesus (who is most properly the Mediator, according to 1 Tim. ii. 5.) to be also present before the world was made, to be chosen and appointed as the redeemer or reconciler of mankind, to be then ordained the Head of his future people, to receive promises, grace, and blessings in their name, and to accept the solemn and weighty trust from the hand of his Father, i. e. to take care of millions of souls? Read the following scriptures,

and see whether they do not imply thus much, 1 Tim. ii. 5. "There is one mediator between God and men, even the man Christ Jesus." Eph. i. 34. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." 2 Tim. i. 8, 9. "God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Tit. i. 2. "Eternal life, which God that cannot lye promised before the world began." Now to whom could this promise be made but to Jesus Christ, and to us in him, as the great patron and representative of believers?

It was by virtue of this covenant, and the sacrifice of his own blood, which Christ was to offer in due time, that all the benefits of this covenant were derived upon mankind in the various ages of it, ever since the fall of man; therefore Christ was a Saviour from the beginning of the world; and those who apply all these things merely to the divine nature of Christ, as consenting to this covenant upon the proposal of the Father, do yet suppose the human nature of Christ to be included in it in the view of God the Father, by way of prolepsis or anticipation. But surely it seems much more proper to explain these things concerning the human soul of Christ as actually united to the divine nature, and actually consenting to this covenant, since the human nature was to endure the sufferings; and then we need not be constrained

to recur to such proleptical figures of speech to interpret the language of scripture, since the literal sense is just and true.

THUS it appears, if we consider this covenant as made betwixt God the Father, and his Son (and as it is usually called the covenant of redemption) it seems to require the pre-existence of the soul of Christ. Or if we consider the covenant of grace as it has been proposed to men in all ages since the fall, the existence of Christ as God-man, appears requisite also to constitute him a proper Mediator.

If we can but suffer ourselves to believe what I have intimated before, that the Sonship of Christ does not belong to his divine nature, but rather to his human soul considered in its original derivation from God the Father, and in its being appointed to the sacred office of the Messiah; then we have a most evident and obvious interpretation of those scriptures in the New Testament, which have been attended with so much darkness and difficulty, and have given so much anxiety and pains to our divines, viz. John v. 19. "The Son can do nothing of himself," Matt. xxiv. 36. Mark xiii. 32. "But of that day knoweth no man; neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but the Father." Heb. v. 8. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." Now this Sonship refers to ver. 5. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." 1 Cor. xv. 28. "Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." These expressions sound very harsh, if applied to the divine nature

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of Christ, but are very naturally applicable to a being or spirit inferior to Godhead.

To these expressions I might add, John xiv. 28. "The Father is greater than I," which is very hard to apply to the divine nature of Christ, and to make a greater and lesser god; and yet it seems but a poor low assertion if our Saviour spoke it of himself as a mere common man, who began to exist thirty-four years ago: It was no strange thing that God should be greater than a man. But if we suppose it refers to Christ's glorious human soul, which was the first born of every creature, it carries in it something grand and august, and he pays hereby a sublimer honor to God his Father.

ALL other places of scripture, wherein the Son of God is represented, either as receiving or invested with sublime powers from God, or as bearing any inferior characters, have a most natural and easy explication if they are applied to this glorious human spirit, sometimes considered as distinguished from the divine nature, sometimes as personally united to it, and that either in its own existence before its incarnation, or in its incarnate state, according as the context requires; for since both natures have their part and share in man's redemption, they are thus distinguished in the holy scripture; some expressions relating more properly to the one nature, some to the other, and some including both natures united. There is no need of paraphrasing these scriptures at large, and giving an example how these texts may then be interpreted, since this key being given, the way lies open for every unlearned christian to penetrate into the sense of them, and to explain

plain many other scriptures besides those I have cited, by the help of the same doctrine.

ANOTHER argument for this doctrine, drawn from the consequences of it, is, That it does exceedingly aggrandize the personal glory and dignity of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom we never can have too high an esteem, while we keep within the bounds of scripture.

THIS supposition admits and confirms all the honors paid him by other *hypotheses*, and adds yet other honors to him. It allows him all the supreme dignity and perfection of the divine nature, and the titles and attributes of true God, by virtue of the personal union; and it also better secures and maintains the honor of his Deity, by guarding it from those inferior attributions and characters which otherwise must be ascribed to it before his appearance in flesh; and this it doth by proposing a nature below Godhead, which is a fitter subject of those attributions. It allows him also all the honorable and peculiar prerogatives of his conception and the birth of his body, upon which account, as well as others, he was called the Son of God.

AND, besides this, it supposes his human soul to be a most illustrious spirit, which had a long prior glorious existence before his incarnation, and to be the first born of the creation of God, and to have been with the Father, surveying and approving of his works of creation, and perhaps also employed by him in adorning and disposing various parts of the new created world, so far as any thing below pure Godhead was capable of being employed in that work.

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THIS doctrine greatly magnifies the self-denial and the condescending love of our Lord Jesus Christ, in his state of humiliation and death ; it casts a thousand rays of glory upon all the scenes of his humbled estate ; it makes his subjection and obedience to the will of the Father appear much more illustrious, and his charity and compassion to perishing mankind, stand in a very surprising light.

CONCEIVE of this glorious human spirit, the only begotten Son of God, who was vested with such dignity before the creation of the world, united personally to the divine nature, and thus adored by angels, appearing often to the patriarchs in the form of God, with rays of divine majesty, and governing the nation of Israel, or church of God, during all the former ages : Behold this holy and happy Spirit descending from heaven, to take upon him, not flesh only, but the likeness of sinful flesh ; and, according to the ancient covenant between him and his Father, now uniting himself to animal nature in very mean and despicable circumstances, and actually, really, and sensibly feeling the hardships of poverty and a low estate ! See that illustrious Being, who had been surrounded with ministering angels for many ages, coming into our world with all the marks of poverty and meanness ! Behold one higher than angels, supreme above principalities and powers, thrones and heavenly dignities, made a little lower than angels !

How divinely glorious was the love of God, in parting with such a Son from his bosom ! How amazing was the condescension and self-denial of this glorious Saviour, in
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giving himself for us ! How inimitable was his submission to his heavenly Father's will ! His zeal for his Father's honor, and his God-like charity and compassion to sinful men ! When we contemplate his holy soul in his pre-existent and exalted state, foreknowing and surveying all these indignities, these agonies and deaths, and yet resolving to descend into flesh at his Father's proposal, and to endure them all for the redemption of sinners, to what an inconceivable height of sacred astonishment doth this raise all the wonders of his painful life and love ! and how doth it awaken all that is tender in the bosom of a christian ; and penetrate the very heart with divine affection and gratitude to the Son of God his Saviour !

WHEN we conceive of this pre-existent soul of Christ, this glorious, this holy and happy Spirit, with pleasure consenting to his Father's proposal of this most surprising abasement and bloody agonies, it gives us an example of such profound humility, such absolute obedience to God his Father, and such unspeakable love to sinful men, as far surpasses the greatest instances that he ever gave, or ever was capable of giving, while he was here upon earth, if we suppose (according to the common opinion) that he was merely born, and trained up for this service without his own previous consent. This idea of the *love of Christ* answers those sublime characters which the apostle gives of it, Eph. iii. 18, 19. "It is a *love* that has *lengths* and *breadths* in it, that has *heights* and *depths* ; it is a *love* that *passes knowledge*."

As this doctrine casts a beauty upon various passages of scripture, and upon the whole scheme of the christian

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faith; so there is not one scripture, nor one point or article of our faith, that can receive any evil influence from it, no dangerous consequences (that I know of) can possibly attend it. Some of the most zealous and learned defenders of the sacred Trinity have acknowledged to me that they could see no danger of heresy in it, nor any injury to sacred truth, though they themselves had not seen this doctrine yet in a convincing light.

BUT after all, though it be a doctrine that has so many happy advantages attending it, yet it is not necessary in order to make a man a christian, and therefore many primitive christians might not believe it. It casts a beauty indeed upon the whole christian faith, but it does not make a part of the essence of it. Now there are many such beautiful doctrines which might have a veil of darkness or confusion thrown upon them very early in the christian church, especially amidst the reign of *Antichrist*, and again, after some ages, may emerge into light, and entertain the christians of such a later age, with the brightness and pleasure of them; how was the doctrine of the *Millennium* long obscured, i. e. the happy state of the church before the end of the world! It was known and believed in the first centuries, but after the third it was counted a sort of heresy for several ages; and yet now it has arisen into further evidence, and has obtained almost universal assent; so this doctrine of *Christ's pre-existent soul*, though it might have lain dormant several ages, yet since that excellent man Dr. *Henry Moore* has published it near threescore years ago, in his *Great Mystery of Goliness*, it has been embraced, as *Bishop Fowler*

ler asserts, "by many of our greatest divines, as valuable men as our church can boast of; though most of them have been too sparing in owning it, for fear, I suppose, of having their orthodoxy called in question."

THE most modern authors and writings, which have professed this doctrine publicly, are these that follow:

1. DR. Henry More, Of the Mystery of Godliness.
2. DR. Edward Fowler, bishop of Gloucester, in his Discourse of the Descent of the Man Christ Jesus from Heaven, and his Reflexions on the Examiner of this Discourse.
3. A DEFENCE of the Bishop's discourse, by a Presbyter of the Church of England.
4. A SECOND Defence, by the Publisher of the First.
5. MR. Robert Fleming, in his first and third volumes of Christology.
6. A VERY great Man cited (but nameless) by Bishop Fowler, in his Reflections, &c. page 111.
7. MR. Joseph Huxley, in his Treatise of the Glory-Man.
8. DR. Francis Gastrell, Bishop of Chester, in his Remarks on Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity, page 47.
9. MR. Nelson's Learned Friend, in Answer to Dr. Clarke, page 65, 103.
10. DR. Thomas Bennet, in his Discourse of the Trinity in Unity.
11. THE learned Dr. Thomas Burnet of the Charter-house, in his book, *De Statu Mortuorum & Resurrectionis*, published after his death.

12. THE Doctrin of the Trinity intelligibly explained by Dr. Thomas Burnet, Rector of Westkington in Wiltshire.

13. DR. Knight's Primitive Christianity vindicated, in answer to Mr. Whiston's bold Assertions.

IN three of these books, I confess, this opinion is but just mentioned, as the certain and probable opinion of the Author; but, in the rest, it is strenuously asserted and maintained, and in some of them with great degrees of assurance: And, I think, every one of them professes and maintains the real and proper Deity of Christ in that or other parts of their works, so that there is no *Arian* among them all.

AFTER authors of such learning and reputation in the world, as some of these which are named, I have ventured to propose this doctrine once more to the public. It is attended with a variety of arguments drawn from the holy scripture for the support of it, and I have stated much stronger objections than I have ever met with, in opposition [to it from any *English* or *foreign* writers, and I do not find them impossible to be answered.

I DARE not assume that air of assurance which Bishop Fowler has done in several parts of his writings on this subject, when he tells us, "That there is no christian doctrine more clearly delivered than this, and even immediately by our Saviour himself, and often repeated by him: And let the opposers of it be as *magisterially* positive as they will, yet there is not a more plain and undeniable evidence for any one article of faith, than there is for this doctrine; and that this is the sense in which, most certainly,

tainly, the disciples of our Lord understood his declarations." See his reflections on his opposer, page 3, and 23. Yet, I think, I can join with him when he asserts, that "Our Saviour never said a syllable which so much as seems to contradict the plain, literal, natural sense of the words, by which he chose to express this doctrine; and that it is worthy our observation, that there is no one text in the bible (that the bishop knows of) whose *plain and natural sense* so much as seems to thwart the plain sense of those scriptures that he has produced to support it;" and he adds, "What controverted point is there in religion of which we can say the like?*"

THUS far that learned and amiable divine, Dr. WATTS, whose name and writings will, I doubt not, be remembered in the church of Christ with respect and honor, when those of his violent opposers and enemies are buried in eternal oblivion. From the above quotation it is also manifest, that the belief of the pre-existence of the human spirit of Christ, is no invention of my own, nor any novel sentiment, but what many persons of eminence, both for learning and piety, have apprehended and believed before. And to me it seems that the confusion and perplexities attending the common explanations of the doctrine of the Trinity cannot be removed, but by a right apprehension and belief of it.

* Page 254.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Covenant of Grace.

IN our English tongue the word *covenant*, strictly taken, seems to mean a *proper agreement*, or compact, between two or more persons upon certain conditions; but in scripture, besides this sense of the word, it is frequently made use of to express a *purpose* or fixed resolution, Job xxxi. 1. an *ordinance*, or *appointment*, Gen. ix. 9, 17. a decree or *establishment*, Jer. xxxiii. 20, &c. It likewise means an *absolute promise*, Isa. lix. 21. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. and sometimes it signifies a *last will* or *testament*, Heb. ix. 15, &c. The word for covenant, in *Hebrew* ברית, and in *Greek* διαβηκη, seems then to be a word of large signification; and, I conceive, its leading idea is that of an *appointment* or *establishment*: when, therefore, God is said to make a covenant with men, or with regard to men; it doth not necessarily mean a *proper stipulation*, or voluntary agreement between two or more persons, but it seems rather to express a divine purpose and appointment; wherein are contained *precepts* or *promises*, and sometimes both.

THE *Covenant of Works* was a divine establishment made with man in innocency, wherein God determined to bestow on him eternal life upon condition of perfect obedience, which he was to perform in his own person ; but, in case of failure, he was threatened with death, as the just reward of disobedience, and by actual transgression he fell under it.

BUT the *Covenant of Grace* was a divine establishment made with CHRIST, the *second Adam*, whom God had before provided ; and, upon the fall of man, he immediately revealed him to our first parents. Now, it was God's eternal purpose in this covenant, to pardon and save sinners by his Son Jesus Christ, both in a way of justice and grace ; that, as he exercised his glorious mercy toward the guilty and miserable, his divine law at the same time might be magnified and made honorable : and this was to be the way and manner of it ; God's only begotten Son was in due time to take flesh, fulfil the law, and suffer for sin, the just for the unjust ; wherefore *he* is the MEDIATOR of the NEW TESTAMENT, that, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance, Heb. ix. 15. which also our Lord himself plainly declares, where he tells us, " That the FATHER had given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as he had given him," John xvii. 2. Some, indeed, suppose that the covenant was made between the FATHER, SON, and HOLY SPIRIT, as betwixt *three distinct* and *co-eternal persons* in the GODHEAD ; but this opinion seems not to be well grounded, for when the scripture speaks of
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the covenant, it no where saith, that it was made between **THREE** *divine persons* : On the contrary, when the parties in the covenant are named, by the sacred writers, *two only* are mentioned, and no more : which, by the way, seems to imply, that there are not *three* co-equal divine persons in **JEHOVAH**.

Now all that we know, or can know of this matter is from God's word, and the revelation which he hath given us ; and as God hath not declared it to us in the holy scriptures, we cannot assert, *on divine authority*, that the covenant was made between three divine persons in Deity : Men's reasoning and inferences, where there is no express revelation, are for the most part error and folly. There are *others*, and these, I think, by far the greatest part of *Protestant* divines, who represent the covenant as made between *two* only, viz. the Father and the Son ; which representation seems to me most agreeable to scripture, and with them I agree. They suppose indeed, that the covenant was made between two *divine co-equal persons* in the Godhead ; but into this *mistake* (for I conceive it so to be) they were probably led from a supposition that nothing of Christ existed, but pure Deity, before his incarnation ; and also from considering the Deity of Christ to be *another* divine person *distinct* from the Father ; yet by their manner of treating the subject, and speaking of the engagements and parts which the contracting parties in the covenant sustain and perform, they plainly, I think, declare, that one of the parties, even Christ, who became *surety* for fallen men, was not a divine person **EVERY WAY EQUAL** to the Father ; for they often ascribe to this person

son want of strength, and support; and even death itself; and to this phraseology, or manner of speaking, they were probably led by the holy scriptures: for the person therein revealed, and set forth, as the covenant head, and surety for men, hath promises of divine help and support frequently given him by another; and he likewise encourages himself by faith in those promises; but a DIVINE PERSON *properly so*, could neither need, nor receive them: Consequently the covenanting party to whom these promises were made, could not properly be a divine self-existent person in Deity. If it be said the promises were made to his human nature, which he assumed into personal union with the divine; yet in that case, we cannot conceive how he could either need, or receive support from any *other* divine person; seeing his own Godhead would have been infinitely sufficient for him; and, as he is supposed to have undertaken to have redeemed men, it seems absolutely necessarily that, *as a divine person*, he alone should have supported himself: but the contrary to all this evidently appears from scripture.

I CONCEIVE, therefore, that the Covenant of Grace was made betwixt *Jehovah* and Christ his Son; and that the former, even *Jehovah*, God the Father, is greater than his Son Jesus Christ, as he himself declares; and that the latter, even Christ, was both *chosen* and *anointed* and *strengthened* by JEHOVAH his FATHER; and it seems to me, that the contrary cannot be maintained without denying Christ to be the SON of God, and MEDIATOR between GOD and men: But this view of the covenant I shall endeavor to make appear more plainly from the following considerations:

1. BECAUSE the scriptures, speaking of the *Covenant of Grace*, always represent it as between *two* persons only : “I have made, saith *Jehovah*, a covenant with *my chosen*, MY covenant shall stand fast with HIM,” Psalm lxxxix. 3, 28. And the counsel of peace, which I conceive relates to this covenant, is said to be between them *both*, viz. *JEHOVAH* and the *BRANCH*, i. e. God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, Zech. vi. 13.

2. THE scripture expressly declares, that “God hath given Christ to be a covenant of the people,” Isa. xlix. 8. And again he saith, *I will give thee for a covenant*, &c. Isa. xlii. 6. But is it proper, or will the scripture warrant us to say, that one divine person, every way equal, co-essential, and co-eternal, is given by another divine person? Certainly not. I conceive, therefore, that the person given is the SON of God; one who was capable of being given as a *substitute*, and of *obeying* and *suffering* also: therefore he is likewise called *God's servant*, as sent by him, both to do and suffer, what the law and justice of God required for the redemption of fallen men; wherefore, God the Father also, who called him to be his servant, promises to hold *his hand* and *to keep him*, and that he should *not fail*, *nor be discouraged*, until he had set judgment in the earth; and on these promises he relied with the most steadfast faith, and unshaken confidence, saying, “I will put my trust in him,” Heb. ii. 19. and again, “The Lord God will help me, *therefore* shall I not be confounded; *therefore* have I set my face like a flint, and I KNOW that I shall not be ashamed,” Isa. l. 7. And what is it better than mere shuffling and evasion, for any one still to object and say, that these promises were made to Christ's *human*, and not
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to his divine nature, *personally* considered ; for they are plainly made to his *whole person* : and there is no mention of any DIVINE NATURE, or PERSON, but what is included in him that *promises to help him*, who is manifestly God the Father ; for surely no one will pretend to say, that Christ made these promises to himself.

3. THE covenant was made with CHRIST because he is the MEDIATOR ; whose office is to interpose, reconcile, and make peace, between persons at variance, even between God and men : for there is one God and one Mediator, between God and men, the MAN *Christ Jesus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

Now, as Christ hath made peace between God and men, by fulfilling all righteousness, and laying down his life for us ; and, as this was the *grand* CONDITIONARY *part of the* COVENANT, in order to remove the curse and restore life to fallen men ; it is fit, and most reasonable to believe that the covenant was made with the man Christ Jesus, WHO *fulfilled the terms*, and *performed the conditions* of it.

4. BECAUSE Christ, as a glorious *human Spirit*, was JEHOVAH's *first born*, the BEGINNING of his way ; whom HE hath appointed *heir* of all things ; by whom also HE made the worlds, who is the *express image* of the INVISIBLE GOD : according to whose divine image, also, Adam the first was undoubtedly created ; and, therefore, *he also* is called the Son of God. For these reasons, I say, it seems plain to me, that the *Covenant of Grace* was made with the man Christ Jesus ; and, therefore, when man fell, the *right of redemption* belonged to him ; who evidently appears to be the most fit and proper person to

redeem his fallen brethren, and recover the forfeited inheritance for all those that the Father had given him; nor can I see how the right of redemption would have belonged to Christ, as next of kin, had he not pre-existed as a proper human spirit. Was not the redemption of persons and their inheritance by the next of kin under the law, which God himself appointed, a typical representation of this mystery? See Ruth, chap. iv. Therefore, when the fulness of time came for Christ to take flesh, a human body, fitted to his human soul, was prepared for him; wherefore when he cometh, into the world, he saith, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a *body* hast THOU prepared me:" and thus saith the scripture, "It behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren," that he might be capable of obeying and suffering all that was necessary for our redemption; and thus he became a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

5. THE covenant was made with Christ, because the law required obedience, not from a divine, but a human person. The condition of life, according to the law, is to do all it commands; and, in case of transgression, to bear the curse and suffer the penalty due to sin. Though it be not necessary that the same person that sinned should suffer, for the law admits of a *surety* and *substitute*; yet, of necessity, the *same nature* that sinned must suffer; another nature different from man's could not satisfy the law for men; nor recover his forfeited right to the heavenly inheritance.

Is it not *blasphemy* and bordering upon *Atheism*, to assert that the GODHEAD, in any personal mode whatever, could

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in a *proper* sense, be made under the law, and suffer? But however absurd and shocking such a supposition may be, there are many professing christians who seem so to speak, as if they believed that DEITY itself *suffered*. And is not this the consequence of their being taught that a *divine person* was made under the law, and that CHRIST *gave* his GODHEAD? For when the scripture speaks of the Father's giving his own Son, and of Christ *giving himself*, it means to suffer and die. Now, if the Godhead of Christ was *thus* given, and did *thus* suffer, certainly his Godhead was a created Godhead: they, therefore, that thus conceive and speak of Christ's Godhead, whatever they may pretend, are, in this respect, of ARIAN sentiments, and teachers of their very doctrine. If it be said, though their words, properly taken, *seem* to have that meaning, yet they who use them, do not in reality mean so by them; for they all know and believe, that Christ only obeyed and suffered in his human nature. If this indeed be all that they intend and mean by such strange expressions; then why this contention and strife with their brethren? for this is what they also believe and teach. Now, as Christ, who knew no sin, was made a surety for sinners, and, by his obedience unto death, hath performed the condition of the covenant; doth it not necessarily follow, that God the Father covenanted, not with another divine person, who neither could, nor did suffer; but with his Son, the *man* Christ Jesus, who in reality laid down his life, and gave himself a sacrifice for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world, according to the will of GOD and our FATHER?

6. THE *Covenant of Grace* was made not with a *co-equal* person in the Godhead, but with a person *inferior* to God the Father, because, as hath been already observed, the Father gave him promises of help and strength, and he prayed to the Father to be strengthened by him. See Psalm xxii. 19. and lxxxix. 21, 26, 27. Isa. xlix. 8. and ch. l. 7. Heb. v. 7, 8. but two co-equal persons where *both* are supposed to be *infinite* and *omnipotent*, cannot either of them possibly need, or receive help from each other; but he with whom God covenanted to be the Redeemer of men, did need, and actually receive support from the Father: and, as this cannot be understood of any person, but of the man Christ Jesus, it plainly follows, that the covenant was made with him. If it be yet said that Christ had a Godhead, or was a divine person, in *distinction* from the Father; I answer, the scripture never mentions any: and further, had that been the case, it is unaccountable that his support should not have proceeded from his own divine person or Deity: but when the scripture speaks of Christ as a proper person, and as Mediator between God and men; he is always represented as being sent, strengthened, supported, and as living by the Father. Therefore it seems plain, that the covenant was made between God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, and rose again.

7. THE covenant was made with the man Christ Jesus, because he is exalted *with* the Father's right hand, and is crowned with honor and glory as a reward for what he hath done and suffered, as *Jehovah's* servant in the work of redemption: he hath also received gifts for men; such

such as the gift of the Holy Ghost, pardon, and eternal life; and these things cannot, I think, with truth be spoken, nor understood of a divine person, but of the man Christ Jesus only. And I am persuaded, that all the wisdom of men cannot give any JUST REASON why there should be any DIVINE PERSON in CHRIST, BESIDES GOD THE FATHER, nor assign any use or benefit it would be of to mankind. And, I humbly conceive, that the contrary doctrine doth not at all advance the glory of God, or his Christ; but quite the contrary: ONE infinitely PERFECT GOD, even the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ; and ONE perfect MAN, even Christ, who knew no sin, being united in one, are every way sufficient to save fallen man; to work all our works, both in us and for us; and this is that GOD and the LAMB, to whom all salvation is constantly ascribed by the church, throughout the scripture.

8. It appears from hence, because *Adam* was a type of Christ, and that considered as a covenant head; for his offence and disobedience is contrasted with the obedience and righteousness of Christ; and the one is set over against the other, with the effects and consequences thereof: for, as by the former came condemnation and death upon all his seed; so by the latter came justification and life upon all his seed: Rom. v. 19—24. therefore, also, the Lord from heaven is declared to be the second man, who was made a quickening spirit: further the apostle testifies, that “as by man came death, so by man also came the resurrection of the dead;” which certainly must include every condition of the covenant, as performed by him; for if by man came the resurrection from the dead,

dead, so by man came redemption from the curse, with justification, and a title to life.

It seems, therefore, to be contrary to all reason, and also to the express testimony of scripture, to say that Christ, as a divine person, and not as man, was chosen of God, covenanted to redeem men; and fulfilled the conditions of life for them. Could a divine person be *made* a quickening Spirit? or be called a *man*, the second man, &c.? If it be said there was a divine person in the man Christ, and personally united to him, this we also believe and affirm; but *who was this divine person?* The scripture saith, it was GOD the FATHER, and never speaks of any other: Therefore God the Father was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself. This might further be argued from hence, that as CHRIST is the HEAD of the CHURCH; so GOD is the HEAD of CHRIST. Nor can this be understood merely by way of oeconomy, but personally and properly; for Christ is *properly* and really the head of the church, and not *economically* only.

UPON the whole, then, I conceive it to be contrary to all reason and revelation to say, that the covenant was made with any person, but with him that, by obedience unto death, performed the condition of it; or that Christ is both GOD and MAN, considered as *Mediator between GOD and MEN*. For as there is but ONE GOD, *he that* is a mediator *between* that one God and men, must be *properly distinguished* from him: And as the *condition* of life was the *death* of Christ, which, *as man* alone, he could perform; therefore with him, *as man*, was the covenant made for us.

INFERENCES

1. FROM hence, as I conceive, it appears that the *Covenant of Grace* was made before the world began, between God the Father and his Son, the man Christ Jesus, who was then begotten of him, and in union with him; by whom also he made the worlds. And as GOD in Christ CREATED, so in Christ HE redeemed the world; who was likewise chosen and appointed of the Father to raise up and bring again fallen and rebellious creatures of the human race; to which also, *Christ, being present*, ACTUALLY CONSENTED to be the Father's servant; and a mediator between God and men: Therefore he is said to receive grace, and the promise of life for us, before the world began; 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. And thus GOD, as the prophet speaks, "gave his Son to be a covenant of the people," &c. But Christ of himself *alone*, without the Father, did not, nor could save sinners; therefore, as he was sent, so he was sustained and strengthened by the indwelling Deity, even God the Father, to whom he ever was, and is united: On the other hand (I speak with reverence) we cannot conceive how God the Father could save sinners without Christ; but this we know he neither would nor did; for the Godhead cannot suffer: and this, I apprehend, is the chief reason why Christ is called "*The ARM of Jehovah*;" and *the man of his right hand*, whom God the Father made strong for himself;" Psalm lxxx. 17. And as the Father loveth the Son, so the Son loveth the Father with a love that passeth knowledge; therefore, in obedience to the Father, he freely and cheerfully took flesh, fulfilled the law, and suffered death for us.

AFTER this manner GOD the FATHER, *in and by* Christ; and Christ, the *Son*, as Mediator, *in and from* God, saves sinners; not one without the other, but both together: therefore Christ is worthy to be honored and glorified with the Father by all the heavenly hosts of redeemed saints and holy angels; and will be so to all eternity, even after he shall have delivered up the kingdom to GOD, even the FATHER; and when the SON also HIMSELF is subject unto him that put all things under him, THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL, 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28. But the Father and Son are not worshipped and glorified in all respects alike; nor as two equal divine persons; but the FATHER, as the LIVING and TRUE GOD giving, sending, and upholding his Son, and reconciling us to himself by his Son; and the SON, as actually coming down from heaven, taking flesh, obeying the law, and dying for us; and as him whom GOD hath made both Lord and Christ.

THUS the Father and Christ are two, and yet but one God and Saviour. It was necessary that fallen man should have a perfect man for his Saviour in every respect like unto himself, sin only excepted; and such was the man Christ Jesus: And it was equally necessary that the eternal God should be his Saviour. Therefore, as man and mediator, Christ alone, exclusive of all other, whether men or angels, is called our SAVIOUR; and there is salvation in no other: "for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved:" But as Christ was chosen, sent, and anointed of God the Father to be the Saviour of men, and was strengthened and carried through the whole work of man's redemption by JEHOVAH his Father, and is now exalted, with the Father's right hand,

to be a prince and a Saviour; therefore God the Father is called God our Saviour: Thus all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ: and hence it is that our salvation is jointly and unitedly ascribed to God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. "THIS is the true God, and eternal life: Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

2. It appears, then, that the condition of the *Covenant of Grace* on Christ's part was, to take flesh, bear sin, fulfil all righteousness, and be made a curse for sinners, even for all that the Father had given him. And the condition on the Father's part was, that he would be always with him, anoint and fill him with his eternal Spirit, uphold and strengthen him with his omnipotent arm, until he had perfected the work which the Father had given him to do; (which work he finished upon the cross) that he would then raise him from the dead, exalt him to be a prince and a Saviour; give him all power in heaven and in earth: and in one word, that he should see of the *travail of his soul*, and be satisfied.

AND thus is Christ exalted, and made a *vital head* of saving influence unto all his redeemed people; according as he hath received grace, and merited, and taken possession of eternal life for every one of them. But whatever blessings Christ is filled with for his people, he hath received them all from the Father; therefore God the Father also is said to give his Spirit and repentance, and remission of sins, unto his people, *through Christ*, and *for his sake*: for as, on the one hand, Christ, by his obedience unto death, hath merited pardon and life

for his people; so, on the other hand, God the Father gave Christ himself, even his own Son, to be the Saviour; and together with him he freely gives us all things with eternal glory: therefore, the *Covenant of Grace*, which was properly and personally made with Christ before the world began, is also made with God's chosen in Christ, and is confirmed to all that truly believe in him: which covenant consists in free and absolute promises of remission of sins, and of personal holiness, and of life through his name: both repentance and faith which are necessary to salvation, are purchased blessings of the covenant, and promised through Christ, and sure to all the seed; for God hath exalted his Son Jesus to give repentance and remission of sins, Acts v. 31. who also is the author and finisher of our faith, Heb. xii. 2. Thus Christ, who died for us according to the will of God, is by him filled with the Spirit of life and holiness, that he might be a spiritual head of vital influence to his redeemed people; for as it hath pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell in Christ; so it is the will of God, that all saints should immediately receive out of Christ's fulness, and grace for grace. To whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Divine Personality.

I SHALL not trouble myself, nor the reader, with the various, labored, and perplexing definitions, which many *theological* writers have given us of the word PERSON; by which I understand an *individual rational being*, or one single intelligent agent; and to such a being the personal characters, *I, thou, and he*, are, and may, with propriety be applied: And every body knows that such a rational being is possessed of understanding and will. Thus I mean by the term *person* what is properly so called, and what is commonly understood and meant by *that word* whenever we hear others make use of the term, or speak it ourselves.

I do not, therefore, mean by the word *person* any *single power, property, or mode of subsistence*, which a *single* intelligent agent may possess, or make use of; but I mean the BEING HIMSELF, as an individual distinctly subsisting: for whatever arbitrary meaning the *school divines* and metaphysical writers may have put upon the word *person*; yet strictly and properly taken, it never means in scripture,

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nor in common language, more or less than one SINGLE rational BEING. And, as this is the common meaning of the term, it ought never, if intended to be taken *properly*, to be used in any other sense : especially in divinity, all *ambiguity of expression* ought to be carefully avoided, because plain and illiterate hearers of the gospel, which make up the greatest part of every christian congregation, will always understand by the word *person*, if they have any idea at all of it, what is commonly meant thereby; that is, a distinct intelligent being. They have no notion of applying the term *person* (unless in a figurative sense) to the *breath*, or *word*, or *hand* of a rational being; because he *lives*, *speaks*, and *acts* thereby; much less to any *internal modes* of distinction in *one*, and the *same* rational MIND; for by a person they always will, and cannot but understand a *proper, complete, distinct*, INTELLIGENT BEING, who by his *breath*, or spirit, *word*, or speech, &c. is capable of performing various distinct *personal* acts. Therefore when the term *person* is applied to *men*, they do, and ought to understand by three such persons, *three men*; if to *angels*, THREE persons are *three created spirits*, or angels; if to *Deity*, three persons are *three infinite spirits*, or three gods: besides the wisdom and goodness of God hath condescended to instruct us in divine things by the help of *images taken from nature*, that are familiar to us; by which *natural* and *visible emblems* we are enabled to form a *proper*, though but imperfect *idea* of things spiritual and invisible.

THUS we are taught to reason by *analogy*; and by *earthly things*, to conceive of heavenly things: And

this

this, I apprehend, is a certain truth in the case before us, for God created man in his own image; but the first man was not *three persons*, but *one only*. Some, indeed, would have us conceive of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, by the essential powers and faculties of the human soul, such as the *understanding*, and *will*, and *conscience*: but it is plain that this gives us no idea of a trinity of *persons* in one essence; but only of a trinity of *essential powers* or faculties in one, and the same spirit or person: and if this is all that is meant by a Trinity in the Godhead, no body will contend with them about it; and indeed this seems to be all that is meant by some *reputed* Trinitarians, who hold what is called a *modal* distinction, or trinity in one and the same divine being; but this, with respect to personality, is, in truth, none at all. Some perhaps may think that *body*, *soul*, and *spirit*, which together make but one complete man, may be an emblem of it; but even this, though it expresses a trinity, yet not of persons; and much less of *co-equal* persons, for the whole three make but one proper human person: and the spirit of man is certainly of a different nature, and also greater than the body. Others suppose that a trinity of persons in the Godhead is revealed by the *three created agents* in nature; viz. by *fire*, *light*, and *air*: but neither do these express a *personal* Trinity; but, as I conceive, quite the contrary: for I apprehend them to be but three *conditions*, or powers of *one natural spirit*: but three modes, powers, or properties of one and the same spirit, are not three persons, but one only.

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BUT whatever distinctions there may be in the all-perfect Deity; and whatever may be intentionally shadowed forth to us by fire, light, and air, in the natural world; or by the distinct properties and essential powers of the soul of man; they are, I think, by no means intended to give us an idea of God as subsisting in three distinct persons; but as of one only, who, as such, is a BEING of *absolute perfection* as a consuming *fire*, he will destroy his enemies: as the *light*, he will exhilarate and comfort the hearts of his troubled people: and, as the *breathing air*, he will revive and put life into their souls.

AFTER all; the scriptures, and not human reason, must determine this matter: for if God, in his holy word, hath *so declared* it to us, then it is our indispensable duty to believe it; and to captivate our reasoning to divine revelation: but I conceive that the holy scriptures do plainly and expressly declare, that there is but *one proper person* in the GODHEAD.

IT is certain, and, I imagine, will be allowed, that the scripture never expressly saith, that the Father, Son, and Spirit are **THREE PERSONS** in *one divine essence*; neither doth it any where say, that they are three *co-equal*, and *co-essential* persons: nor that these *three* are **ONE GOD**. And, if the divine word doth not plainly declare this, then, I conceive, the doctrine cannot be of God, but must be entirely built on inferences and deductions drawn by human reasoning from certain passages in scripture, which some good and pious men may have thought to be the sense and meaning of them: But is not this a very precarious and weak foundation whereon to build so important a

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doctrine? Is it not possible, yea, is it not probable, that such reasoning may be false; that the inference itself is unnatural, and cannot be well supported from divine revelation, seeing the scripture doth *no-where* EXPRESSLY declare it? And who will build his salvation on a ground which has no *express* revelation to rest upon? Every other great doctrine is plainly and *expressly* declared in the divine word; and can we suppose that *this* alone is left to be inferred by labored reasonings, far beyond the reach and capacity of ordinary christians? But let us a little enquire into this matter.

1. THE scripture in several places speaks of the Godhead, but doth it in any one of them say, or so much as intimate, that its mode of subsisting is in a Trinity of distinct persons? See the following scriptures: "We must not think that the GODHEAD is like unto silver or gold," &c. Acts xvii. 24. "The invisible things of him are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even *his eternal power* and GODHEAD," Rom. i. 20. "In him (Christ) dwelleth all the fulness of the GODHEAD bodily," Col. ii. 9. Now, what is there in either of these scriptures, that can warrant any man to suppose that the Godhead subsists in *three* divine persons? We are here told, that the eternal power and Godhead of the Deity are clearly seen in his works of creation; but whence or how do the works of creation clearly reveal three divine persons in the essence? And we are further told, that "all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily." But do *three divine persons* dwell in him? The Father dwells in him, we know; but

we read of no other person dwelling in him ; and therefore it is most reasonable to suppose that the whole Godhead, in point of personality, is to be referred to the Father, who dwelleth in Christ his Son in all the fulness of his Godhead.

2. THE scripture, in many places, saith, that God is ONE. "There is ONE GOD, and there is *no other* but HE," Mark xii. 32. "We know there is none other GOD, but ONE," 1 Cor. viii. 4. "It is ONE GOD that shall justify the circumcision by faith," &c. Rom. iii. 20. "A mediator is not a mediator of one, but GOD is ONE," Gal. iii. 20. "To us there is but *one God*, the FATHER," 1 Cor. viii. 6. "There is ONE GOD and *one Mediator* between God and men, the MAN *Christ Jesus*," 1 Tim. ii. 5. Now, in all these scriptures (and many more such that might have been cited) there is nothing like a plurality of persons in the Godhead even so much as hinted to us, but quite the contrary ; for what words can be more plain and express, GOD is *one* ; GOD is *but one* ; there is *no other* GOD but *one* ; and *personally* to us there is but *one* GOD the FATHER : How is it then that we, who have the scriptures in our hands, and profess to believe and be led by them, should be so constantly taught, and so easily induced to believe, that God is not one, but *two* or *three* ? Do the apostles, in either of these places, or in any other, tell us, that they meant *not one* in PERSON, but *one* in ESSENCE ? Nothing less : rather do they not manifestly speak of the invisible God under a personal character, as God the Father ? and do they not constantly apply to the one God the single personal pronouns, *I*,
thou,

thou, and he, and thereby declare in the clearest and fullest manner, that they meant one single divine being or person, distinctly subsisting ?

3. Do not the scriptures often declare and testify, that CHRIST is the SON of the ONE *living and true God* ? Certainly they do. God the Father himself hath again and again born this witness of him, by an express voice from heaven, saying, “ This is MY beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased.” Christ likewise confessed, and in this respect bore witness of himself, that he was the Son of God, and sent by him ; and the apostles with one consent, and the Holy Ghost by them, constantly declared and testified that Jesus Christ was the Son of God ; and, *as such*, they preached him both to *Jew and Gentile*. Wherefore ? To this end ; that whosoever believeth on him (not as a distinct *divine person in the essence*) but as the *Son of God*, and *Mediator* between God and men, might have life through his name, John xx. 31. Now, if Christ be the Son of the living God, and there be but one God, as the scripture witnesseth, doth it not plainly follow, that there is but one *proper person* in the Godhead ? Certainly the *divine Father* of Christ is not two or three persons, but one only ; for as the only begotten SON is but one *proper person*, so the *Father* of that only begotten Son can be but one *person* : but the living God is the Father of Christ ; therefore the living God is but one person : and consequently there is but one proper person in the Godhead. This, I humbly conceive, is not only most reasonable in itself, but perfectly agreeable to the *plain words and sense* of scripture : If it be

said, that Christ, as a Son, is in his own proper person the living and true God, how can this be admitted, consistent with reason or revelation? for would it not from hence necessarily follow, 1. That there are two gods, two supremes? The Father and the Son are certainly two *persons* or *beings*; but the scripture saith, "To us there is but ONE GOD the Father." 2. Would not this make the living God to be an *image*, a *being produced*, a begotten God? And can this be reconciled with the infinite perfections, simplicity, and self-existence of *Jehovah*, either with respect to his essence or personality? But the scripture distinguishes between the *image* of God, and GOD; for he saith, "Christ is the *image of the INVISIBLE GOD*:" therefore not the *image itself*; but he who is represented in and by that image, is the *true God*. 3. Doth not this make Christ, as the living God, to be a *subordinate Deity*? for it is certain that the Father is both before and greater than the Son, for he saith himself, "The FATHER is greater than I," John xiv. 28. But the living God can have none before, or greater than he. Therefore, I infer, that Christ the Son, in his own proper person, as *Son*, is not to be considered as the true God; for, as such, he is the begotten image of God: but the living God, as the scripture witnesseth, is *He* that is the *God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. And it is evident that the FATHER of Christ is not *two*, or more persons, but *one* only.

SHOULD any one from hence infer, that we deny the Godhead of Christ? I answer, that we hereby only deny that there are *two* gods, *two* supremes, and *two* almighties, the one *absolutely equal* to the other. Nor do my
words

words express any more, nor can any other meaning in truth, and in reason, be put upon them. And further, I hope by and by to make it appear, that it is not possible in any other way, or upon any different principle, either to hold or maintain the true and proper Godhead of Christ: That we hold and maintain it is certain; for we constantly affirm, that the living God the Father is personally united to his Son, the man Christ Jesus; and dwells in him immediately in all the fulness of Deity.

To speak otherwise of Christ's Deity, whatever may be pretended, and however well meant, seems to me to make Christ another co-equal and supreme God with the Father, or another inferior subordinate Deity: but the scripture reveals but one God, and constantly calls him the Father. Therefore the GODHEAD of the FATHER, which dwelleth in the Son, must be counted the GODHEAD of CHRIST, or he hath no true GODHEAD at all.

4. THE *Holy Ghost* is the *Spirit* of the *one living and true God*. By this character, and under this relation, he is commonly spoken of in scripture; the following citations are a clear proof of it: "The SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you," 1 Cor. iii. 16. "Sanctified by the Spirit of our God," chap. vi. 11. "The Spirit of the LIVING GOD," 2 Cor. iii. 3. GOD calls him *his Spirit*; "My Spirit shall not always strive with men," &c. Gen. vi. 3. "I will pour out my Spirit upon you," Prov. i. 23. "I have put my Spirit upon him," Isa. xlii. 1. "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed," chap. xlv. 3. "I will put my Spirit upon you," Ezek. xxxvi. 27. "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," Joel ii. 28. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Spirit

hofts," Zech. iv. 6. Christ also tells us, that this holy Spirit proceeded from the FATHER, and calls him the *promise* of his Father : and the apostle testifies, that he (Christ) received this same Spirit of the Father to give unto the church. Now, as there is but one Holy Ghost, the person *whose* Spirit he is, *from whom* he originally proceedeth, and *by whom* he is sent, is but ONE also : but the Holy Ghost is declared to be the Spirit of JEHOVAH, the LIVING GOD, and personally of the FATHER ; therefore it appears from hence also, that the living God, in point of personality, is but ONE. If it be said that the Holy Ghost is also the Spirit of the Son ; I answer, Christ himself declares that he proceedeth from the Father, and never saith, that he proceedeth from himself also ; and he likewise saith, he would pray the Father to give his Spirit to his redeemed people : and the apostles constantly witness that he (the Son) as Lord and Christ, did *receive the Holy Ghost from the Father*. Therefore what can be plainer than this, that the Holy Spirit is originally and properly the Spirit of one person, even of God the Father only ? Nor have we any authority from scripture to say, nor can our understanding conceive, how one and the same Spirit should, in a *proper sense*, be the SPIRIT of TWO DISTINCT PERSONS, and *essential* to the being of each ; neither have we any idea of a person, but what hath a spirit : An *intelligent being*, or person *without a spirit*, is what the scripture hath no-where revealed, nor can human reason tell what it means.

FOR I conceive that a being, or person without a spirit, is a being without life, and power of action ; And what kind of being is that ? Is it not then reasonable to suppose that
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every individual of intelligent beings, whether created or not created, hath a spirit ? and as the Spirit is not another person, he must be essential to the being of that person, whose spirit he is : Therefore, as the spirit of man is necessarily included in the person of a man, so, I humbly conceive, the Spirit of God is likewise included in the person of God.

PERSONAL acts indeed are, with great propriety, ascribed to the Spirit of God and of man ; because the spirit of a living intelligent person, or being, must be a living intelligent agent, though not another distinct person ; for else the Being himself would not be a living intelligent agent. What distinctions there are in the one infinite God, we know not ; but however inconceivably great and glorious they be, yet we are always taught to conceive and speak of them as harmonizing with, and centering in, the unity of his divine person ; for when God created man, he made him in his own image ; and the apostle reasons thus ; “What man *knoweth* the things of a man, *save the spirit of man* which is in him ? even so the things of God *knoweth* no man, but the *Spirit of God*,” 1 Cor. ii. 11.

I INFER, therefore, as there is but one Holy Spirit, and that Spirit is the one infinite Spirit of the living God, even the Father ; there is, and I conceive, there can be but one *proper individual person* in the Godhead.

5. THAT there is but one person in the divine being, is abundantly manifest from hence ; when Christ came into the world he declares first that he was sent by *one*, even *God the Father*. “The LIVING FATHER hath sent me,” John vi. 57. The same person is called the LIVING
GOD,

God, ver. 69. Again, he saith, "I am not alone, but I and *the Father* who sent me," John viii. 16. "As my *Father* hath sent me, even so send I you," John xx. 21. His apostles declare the same truth, "We have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world," &c. 1 John iv. 14. What then can be plainer than this, that Christ was sent by *one single* divine person, even the Father, and that this person was the living God, who anointed, and put *his own Spirit* upon him? and therefore Jesus the Son of God is called, *the CHRIST*.

BESIDES, Christ never ascribes the works which he wrought to any divine person, but to the *Father only*: "The Father, who dwelleth in me, *he* doth the works," John xiv. 10. "The works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me," John x. 25. "Though ye believe not me, yet believe the works, that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him," ver. 38. If it be said that he did them by the Spirit of God; I answer, that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of the Father, by whom he works every thing; not as another divine person, but as his own essential powerful Spirit: therefore the works of his Spirit are personally the works of God the Father; and hence our Lord ascribed them to the Father, as to a proper person: and so speak the apostles, "Ye men of *Israel*, hear these words, Jesus of *Nazareth* a man approved among you by miracles and signs which *God* did *by him*," &c. Again they declare, "that God anointed Jesus with the *Holy Ghost*, and with *power*, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, *for God* was with him." And this is the reason why Christ saith, he did the same
works

works that his Father did, and which the Father shewed him; because God the Father, who dwelt in him, gave him of his own infinite Spirit, and therefore he had power both to raise himself from the dead, and others also. Thus Jesus, by the Holy Ghost, with which he was anointed, wrought all his miracles; and thus it was God the Father dwelling in his Son Jesus Christ, that wrought these works by his own Spirit. Wherefore to blaspheme the Holy Ghost is to blaspheme God himself, *as manifesting himself*, and as graciously speaking and powerfully acting *in the person of his Son*, by the visible displays and divine agency of his own eternal Spirit. But the Spirit, in point of personality, is, I think, evidently included in God the Father, as I hope has been shewn above: and is it not on this account that Christ lays such a stress upon believing *his works*? "that ye may know, saith he, that the Father is in me, and I in him." And again of the unbelieving *Jews* he saith, "They have both *seen* and *bated*, both *me*, and *my Father*," John xv. 24.

HENCE I infer, that JEHOVAH is but one in *person*, and that is GOD the FATHER, whose Son Christ is, and whose essential Spirit the Holy Ghost is. Likewise when Christ offered himself a sacrifice for sin, he offered himself to God the Father; not to *three* divine persons, but to *ONE only*, even the Father, "to whom we were reconciled by the death of *his Son*," Rom. v. 10. and therefore the God, against whom we have sinned, and who demanded, and hath received satisfaction for our sins, is but one person. When Christ also prayed in his great agony to have, if it were possible, the cup of sufferings removed from him, he

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mentions

mentions no person but God the Father, Matt. xxvi. 34. Again, when Christ upon the cross yielded up the Ghost, he committed his own proper *human Spirit* into the hands of GOD the *Father*, Luke xxiii. 46. When he ascended, he ascended to GOD the FATHER, John xx. 17. Jesus was also exalted, as the apostle tells us, by the right hand of GOD the FATHER, Acts ii. 33. And when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power, for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; he then, we are told, "shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the FATHER," 1 Cor. xv. 24. Therefore, if the FATHER means ONE PROPER PERSON, as most certainly he doth; *Jehovah* the living God, personally considered, is but *one* person, and not *two* or *three*.

6. I CANNOT find one scripture where Christ is spoken of as a person in distinction from the Father; but he is always considered and set forth as *his SON*; and as one *begotten*: or else this *same* person is represented, as sustaining some *office*, and bearing the glory of it; to which also he is said to be *chosen*, *appointed* and exalted of the *Father*. Moreover God the Father is said to dwell and to manifest himself, in Christ; and also to work by him both in the works of creation, providence, and redemption. And hence, I conceive, he is called the *WORD*, and *ANGEL* of GOD, and God's salvation, or him whom he hath given and exalted to be the Saviour of men, God's King, &c. and where-ever he is so called, he is generally in his own proper person plainly distinguished from the one *Jehovah*, God absolutely, or from

God

God the Father, who, as Christ himself also testifies, is both his Father, and our Father.

FURTHER : Christ as the Son of God, and the Son of man, is always spoken of as one and the same person; for though he is truly and properly man, yet he had no Father but God only: He is also set forth as having suffered and died *as the Son of God*; and afterwards, as such, to have been exalted with the Father's right hand. Nor do we ever read of any person in the Godhead united to, and dwelling in Christ, but the Father only.

7. **THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, ISAAC, and JACOB**; the LORD GOD of the holy prophets, is constantly declared to be the GOD and FATHER of Christ. "It is written, saith he, they shall all be taught of God; every one therefore, that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me," John vi. 45. "It is my Father that honoreth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God," John viii. 54. "The GOD of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; the GOD of our Fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus," &c. Acts iii. 13, 18, 22, 25, 26. "The God of our Fathers hath raised up Jesus, &c. Acts v. 30. He then that is the Father of Christ is the living and true God, as himself testifies, "This is life eternal, to know THEE the ONLY TRUE GOD, and JESUS CHRIST whom thou hast sent," John xvii. 3. Peter's confession of him was the same, "Thou art CHRIST the Son of the LIVING GOD," John vi. 69; and thus Paul preached him among the heathen, "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the LIVING and TRUE GOD, and to wait for his Son from heaven," &c. 1 Thess.

1.9, 10. And so the apostles preached Christ, and so the first christians believed on him, i. e. they constantly preached that the LIVING GOD, was the FATHER of Christ; and that Christ was the Son of the living God; without ever mentioning, that I can find, or even hinting at any plurality of persons in the GODHEAD.

THUS the scriptures plainly, fully, and expressly declare, that *Jehovah*, the living God, is but one; and that he is the Father of Christ, and that God the Father dwelleth in all his glorious fulness in his Son Jesus, by whom we have access unto him. and peace with him.

THIS is more abundantly manifest yet, from other plain and express words of scripture, wherein we find that GOD ABSOLUTELY considered, and the FATHER PERSONALLY, are always used as terms *equivalent*, or synonymous, and consequently are expressive of, and do always mean one and the same divine being, WHO WAS, AND IS, AND IS TO COME, THE ALMIGHTY.

I WILL cite at large a few of those scriptures from whence I hope it will plainly appear; and they are such as these: "The God of the spirits of all flesh," Numb. xvi. 22. "Is not *he* thy Father that hath bought thee?" Deut. xxxii. 6. "I am a Father to *Israel*," Jer. xxxi. 9. "If I be a Father," &c. Mal. i. 6. "Have we not all ONE FATHER, hath not ONE GOD created us?" chap. ii. 10. Compare these with Heb. xii. 9. "The Father of spirits." John vi. 45. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God; every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the FATHER, cometh unto me;" and chap. xvi. 27, 30. "The FATHER him-

self

self loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God : I came forth from the FATHER, and am come into the world ; again I leave the world, and go to the FATHER." His disciples answered, " Behold, now speakest thou plainly : By this we believe that thou camest forth from God," chap. xvi. 27-30. " I ascend unto my FATHER, and your FATHER ; unto my God and your God," chap. xx. 7. " Therewith bless we God, even the FATHER," James iii. 7. " The God and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who is blessed for ever more, knoweth that I lye not," 2 Cor. xi. 31.

TIME would fail me to cite all the passages wherein this GLORIOUS TRUTH is plainly and expressly declared. Nevertheless, because it is a point of great moment to know the *right object* of worship, I will proceed to quote a few passages more, where the FATHER and the SON, that is, the ONE GOD, and ONE MEDIATOR between God and men, are mentioned together. Now it is in this manner that the apostles begin almost all their epistles ; which preface or introduction doth not only contain the apostles earnest desire and prayer for the saints, to whom they wrote their epistles, but it is manifestly designed to express, and remind them of the true object of worship, i. e. of the one living and true God, whom they constantly call the Father ; and of the way of coming to him by one Mediator, even Jesus Christ : they manifest and remind us also of the relation that God stands in to Christ, and to all believers in Christ ; for they declare that he is both the Father of Christ, and of all the saints through Christ : they shew likewise that Christ is their head and Lord,

being;

Being made and constituted such by the Father; and lastly, therein is declared, that the saints do not *immediately* come to God in their own persons, nor receive any thing from him for their own work or righteousness sake; but that they come unto God, and receive all blessings from him, by the person of Christ the Mediator, and *for his sake alone*; because by his obedience unto death, he removed the curse from them, and merited life for them: And it is the will of God, that Christ should first in his own person receive all things from him, for his church; and, then, that his church should receive all things from Christ, who as man, by the Father's appointment, is their proper head, Lord, and Saviour. And thus God hath blessed his people with all spiritual blessings in Christ; therefore the apostolic benediction and prayer for all saints is, that they may receive grace and peace, both from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ: and this is abundantly manifest from the following scriptures: "To all that be in *Rome*, beloved of God, grace unto you, and peace from GOD our FATHER, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST," Rom. i. 7. "To the church of God at *Cerinth*, grace, &c. from GOD our FATHER, and from the Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. i. 3. In the second epistle chap. i. 2. he uses the same words, and adds, ver. 3. "Blessed be GOD, even the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ, the FATHER of mercies, and the GOD of all comforts." Again, "*Paul* an apostle by Jesus Christ, and GOD the FATHER, who raised him from the dead: Grace unto you, and peace from GOD the FATHER, and from our LORD JESUS CHRIST, who gave himself from our sins,

sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of GOD and our FATHER," Gal. i. 1, 2, 3. "Paul an apostle of JESUS CHRIST, by the will of GOD, to the saints which are at *Ephesus*: Grace to you and peace from GOD our FATHER, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Blessed be the GOD and FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," &c. Eph. i. 1, 2, 3, 4. He prays also, ver. 17. "That the GOD of our Lord Jesus Christ, the FATHER of glory, may give unto them the Spirit of wisdom," &c. See also chap. ii. 18, 22. chap. iii. 14. chap. iv. 6. chap. v. 20. "To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at *Philippi*: Grace unto you, and peace from GOD our FATHER, and from the Lord Jesus Christ," Phil. i. 2. "To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which are at *Colosse*: Grace unto you, and peace from GOD our FATHER, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to GOD, and the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ," Coloss. i. 2, 3. "The mystery of of GOD, (even) of the FATHER, and of Christ," chap. ii. 2. "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks unto GOD, and (even) the FATHER by him," chap. iii. 17. "To the church of the *Thessalonians* in GOD the FATHER, and in the Lord Jesus Christ," &c. 1 Thess. i. 1, 2. and 2 Thess. i. 1, 2. "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of GOD our Saviour, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope: Unto *Timothy* my own Son in the faith, grace, mercy, and peace from GOD our FATHER, and from Jesus Christ

Christ our Lord," 1 Tim. i. 1, 2. "There is **ONE GOD** and **ONE MEDIATOR** between God and men, **THE MAN CHRIST JESUS**," chap. ii. 5.

Now what can be more plain, express, and determinate in all divine revelation than this; that in the Godhead there is but one person, who, when he is spoken of under a relative personal name, or character, is ever called the **FATHER**?

WHAT distinctions there may be in the infinite and ever blessed God, we presume not to say: God is great, and we know him not: we know no more than, in his word, he himself hath been pleased to reveal unto us; but if there be any meaning in words, and if the scripture be a plain revelation of God, and a faithful and true declaration of his mind and will concerning us, which every christian must and will allow, then, I think, this is one of the plainest truths in all the bible: That as there is but *one* Mediator between God and men, viz. his *only begotten* SON, the **MAN CHRIST JESUS**; so there is but **ONE** living and true God, who is the **GOD and FATHER** of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**; and whatever **DISTINCTIONS** there be in the Godhead, they are not revealed to us as *properly* personal, nor ought, nor can they with truth be so called, but as they are all comprehended, and declared to us by the single personal character of **ONE**, even of God the Father.

WILL it again be asked, How then is Godhead ascribed to the Son? and why are the works of creation ascribed to him, and worship given to him? These, we conceive, are easy to be understood, and will be considered more
fully

fully afterwards, and may, I conceive, be all explained from those three scriptures, where he himself saith, "The Father is in me, and I in him," John x. 38. and where the apostle saith, "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," Col. i. 19. and where he saith again, "God hath given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of JESUS every knee should bow," &c. Phil. ii. 9, 10. But I fear nothing will satisfy some persons, unless we attempt to make him *another* God, and ascribe a Godhead to Christ that is not the Father's; and by that means he will be totally undeified.

9. THAT there is but one proper person in the Godhead, may be further demonstrated from those scriptures, where the living God, as the supreme object of divine worship, is represented as one single person only; and in many of them he is expressly called the FATHER, and is also distinguished from the Son, who at the same time is represented as being in, and with God the Father. "The true worshippers, saith Christ, worship the FATHER in Spirit and in truth, for the FATHER seeketh such to worship him. GOD is a Spirit (not three spirits) and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in truth," John iv. 23, 24. "That every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, unto the glory of GOD the FATHER," Phil. ii. 11. "For this cause I bow my knees unto the FATHER of our Lord Jesus Christ," Eph. iii. 14. "If ye call on the FATHER," &c. 1 Pet. i. 17. "Salvation to our GOD, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the LAMB," Rev. vii. 10. "I saw no temple therein, for the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, and the LAMB

are the temple of it," Rev. xxi. 22. "And the city had no need of the sun, &c. for the glory of God did enlighten it, and the LAMB is the light thereof," ver. 23. "He shewed me a pure river of water of life, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the LAMB," chap. xxii. 1. "And there shall be no more curse, but the THRONE OF GOD, and of the LAMB shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads," ver. 3, 4.

GOD and the LAMB, whom the apostle so often mentions, are undoubtedly the FATHER and the SON, as appears from the following words of Christ, who, speaking to his followers, saith, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of MY GOD, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my GOD, and the name of the city of my GOD, even New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my GOD; and I will write upon him my new name. To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with MY FATHER in his throne," Rev. iii. 12, 21.

Now what can be plainer than this, that there are but two persons mentioned in all these scriptures: and that one of them is GOD the FATHER, and the other his only BEGOTTEN SON, the LAMB that was slain, the MEDIATOR between God and men: Nor is there any intimation of any personal distinction in the Godhead, nor of the Holy Spirit being a *distinct person*; but all the fulness of Deity is included in one divine person, even the Father: It is also manifest that the Son is all along spoken of, as a
person

person distinct from the Father, *not in Godhead*, but as begotten of him, and *as having suffered*, and *as being exalted* to the throne of God the Father; but the *union* between the Father and Son is here set forth as most intimate, and inconceivable; for the throne of God, and of the Lamb, is but one.

AND lastly, may I not, for the truth of this doctrine, appeal to the general experience of all sincere christians, of every name and degree? If not with their heads, I am persuaded in their hearts they will join with me, and must acknowledge that they have but one proper object of divine worship, and that is, *one GOD in CHRIST*. Do you ordinarily, do you ever come to God as to *three distinct* divine objects or persons? If having been taught so to conceive and speak of God, are you not at a loss how to reduce it to *practice*, and *bring it into experience*? Are you not confused and confounded when you attempt to *divide* the Godhead in your most solemn addresses to him, or to *distinguish* between *three equal* divine objects, or persons? Rather is not this the most easy and natural, as well as most scriptural way, to approach unto GOD as *ONE*, *by* and *for* the sake of Christ his Son, whose blood cleanseth from all sin? And do not you constantly call that God, whom you thus approach, the Father? Do you consider Christ as the supreme God, in distinction from the Father, or as a co-equal person in the essence, when you come to God the Father by him? Would not such a thought in a time of solemn prayer perplex and confound you? on the contrary, is not this your manner to consider and view Christ as the Mediator between you and God? and consider him only as

having fulfilled all righteousness, and laid down his life for you, and as being now your advocate and intercessor with God?

AGAIN: Do you conceive of the HOLY Spirit as *another co-equal divine person* with God the Father? do you ever come to him *by* Christ? or address the Spirit in Christ's name? Rather, do you not humbly ask, and desire of God to give you his Spirit, and to teach and enable you, by his Spirit, to conceive worthily of him and his Christ? and also to call acceptably upon him, through Christ Jesus? and do you not beseech God the Father to shed his love abroad in your hearts *by his* Spirit, to the end that you may joy in God, through Christ Jesus, and walk worthy of him, unto all pleasing?

AND is it not thus, that through the Spirit you both understand and experience, what it is to receive grace and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ? for through him we both have an access by one Spirit unto the FATHER. To whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.

And I have endeavored also to make plain by comparing
scripture with scripture, and by reasoning from these
And I hope no person will expect that I should re-

state of things in the Christian Church, but I have
be somewhat different from him, without leaving me from
these of other scriptures, and by the reasoning therefrom
that I have mistaken their meaning. I should ought to

CHAP. VIII.
OF DIVINE FAITH: FOR HERE WE KNOW WE NO MORE

*Wherein are considered the principal texts that are usually
brought to prove a plurality of divine persons in the God-
head; together with an examination of some of the chief
arguments, commonly made use of in support of that
doctrine.*

THOUGH I do not pretend to be free from mistakes
in the explanation given of the following scrip-
tures ("for we know but in part") yet, I humbly hope
that they are explained in a consistency with the plainer
passages of the sacred word; and that the sense here
given, is in nothing contrary to the *analogy* of faith in
any of the *essentials* of the doctrine of Christ.

SHOULD any one suppose otherwise, I hope that I shall
be truly thankful to the person that will endeavor in the
spirit of a christian, by scripture authority and plain rea-
soning, to convince me of my mistake, and set me
right.

I HAVE indeed, freely and fully, without reserve, given
my opinion of every passage cited on the occasion; sin-
cerely declaring, what I judge to be its true meaning,
which

which I have endeavored also to make plain by comparing scripture with scripture, and by reasoning from thence. And I hope no person will expect that I should retract, or change my present sentiments, because they may be somewhat different from his, without shewing me from these or other scriptures, and by *just* reasoning therefrom, that I have mistaken their meaning. Neither ought any man's *ipse dixit*, or bare word, to be received in matters of divine faith: "for henceforth know we no man after the flesh."

THE first passage that I shall cite on this occasion is, Gen. i. 26. where God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness." It is allowed that this text speaks of a plurality (though not a Trinity) of proper persons, or beings.

2. IT is also allowed, that whoever are meant by the *us*, they are the persons to whom the works of creation are ascribed, and by whom all things were made; and these persons, I conceive, to be two, and no more; viz. God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ: but not two co-equal persons; nor are the works of creation ascribed to them exactly in the same manner. Moreover, it cannot, I think, be proved, nor rationally imagined that here is one person speaking to *two* others, as is commonly supposed; nor do we any where find in scripture, that God is represented *as speaking to his Spirit*; but I often find that he speaks to his Son; therefore it is most reasonable and agreeable to scripture usage, to understand it of *one single person speaking to another single person*; i. e. of the Father speaking to Christ his Son: to him JEHOVAH,

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GOD

GOD the FATHER, said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Psalm ii. 7. and again unto the Son he saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," &c. Heb. i. 8. and again, JEHOVAH said unto my LORD, "Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool," Psalm cx. 1. wherefore he saith again, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands," &c. Heb. i. 10. Therefore they are the words of God the Father to his Son Jesus Christ, by and for whom he made the worlds.

3. THEY do not seem to be two equal persons, but one appears to be greater than the other: one is a Son, and begotten; the other is the Father, and not begotten. The Father, then, in his own person and essence is self-existent, and of none; but the Son is of the Father, and begotten by him; wherefore he saith, "My Father is greater than I," John xiv. 28. Yet we believe that the Son was with the Father before the world was, and that all things were created of the Father, and by the Son. And, I humbly conceive, that this is plainly revealed and testified in the scriptures, for it is written, "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with GOD. All things were created by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made," John i. 1, 3. "GOD created all things by JESUS CHRIST," Eph. iii. 9. "We declare unto you *that* eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us," 1 John 1, 2. "GOD in these last days hath spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also HE made the

the worlds,," Heb. i. 2. "To us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him," 1 Cor. viii. 6. Again the apostle testifies, that Christ the Son "is the image of the INVISIBLE GOD, the first-born of every creature, for by him were all things created, both visible and invisible, &c. for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," Col. i. 15—19. This, that it was the Father's pleasure that all fulness should dwell in Christ, is the grand reason, given by the apostle, why all things were created of God by Jesus Christ, &c. Do not these scriptures, then, plainly and fully prove, that there were but two persons who created all things, viz. the Father and the Son; and that God the Father made the worlds by his Son, as his FIRST BORN and heir; and that the Son, as to his proper person and sonship, is a being inferior to the Father; and at the same time, that the FATHER himself, in all the fulness of his Godhead, dwells in him? If those texts compared, do not plainly and expressly declare these things, I think there is no certainty in the meaning of words or language. Must not a man be under the influence of strong prejudice that denies this? Nor do I see how any one, without wresting and perverting the obvious meaning of the words and sense of scripture, can put a different construction and meaning on them? Now there is not a third person mentioned in all these texts: Therefore, tho' we allow that God created all things in Christ, by the power of his eternal Spirit; yet the Spirit is not considered, nor spoken of, as a distinct person from God the Father, as the Son always is.

3. THE *first man* was the workmanship of God, whom he created in his own image, after his likeness; which seems to make it highly probable, if not indisputably certain, that JEHOVAH is but *one* in person. Certainly there is nothing in man that plainly points out to us a *plurality*, much less a trinity of persons in his CREATOR; for the first man was not *many* persons, but *one* only: but God created man in his own image; and seeing man was, without dispute, a proper image of his Maker, whom he was made to represent in this lower world, doth it not follow, that he, in *whose image he was made*, and whom he represented, is but *one* person only?

THE image of God in man, doth I conceive, eminently respect the rational soul; which, being a spirit created in knowledge, and righteousness, and true holiness, upright and happy, may be truly said to be created in the image of God. "It is the soul, *the great soul of man*, that doth especially bear *God's image*." "The soul is a spirit, an intelligent immortal spirit, an *influencing, active spirit*, herein *resembling God the Father of spirits* *." And where-as CHRIST, the only begotten Son, the *first-born among many brethren*, was the most perfect and express image of the invisible God; man was certainly created both in the image of God, and of Christ: And therefore, the Father speaking to the Son said, "Let us make man in our image:" but it is added also, "after *our likeness*." This probably respects, and may be well understood of the inseparable union and oneness that subsists between the Father and the Son; and also of the invisible God, as *manifesting*

* Henry's Annotat.

himself, and acting in and by his Son Jesus Christ; for thus our invisible spirit doth manifest itself, and act in and by the body; for by the organs and members of the body, the soul sees, speaks, and works, &c. and as the rational soul dwells in it's own body by union with it; so God the Father dwells in Christ; the former being, as it were, a shadow and emblem of the latter. The real distinction also that there is between the Father and the Son, though inseparably united, and, as it were, one complex being and principle of action, together with their difference in nature, and of one being inferior to the other; that is, the Son being inferior to the Father; may perhaps be resembled by man: for the soul and body of man are two, and evidently of two distinct natures, and one inferior to the other; yet by union they are a kind of compound being, and one common principle of action: the spirit acts by the body, though it is capable, in a state of separation, of acting without it: and the body acts from the spirit; and one is the proper habitation and dwelling place of the other: And therefore the first man, considered both with respect to body and soul united, may, I conceive, be said with propriety to be made in the IMAGE of God, and of Christ, and after THEIR likeness. The soul never acted without the body, but in union with it, though it is capable both of existing and acting without the body; neither did God the Father ever act, in any of his works of creation, without Christ, but in union with him, and by him, and as dwelling in him.

THUS all things are of God; who created all things, and hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ.

Therefore

Therefore this, and such-like scriptures, only seem to prove, that Christ the Son of God was begotten of him, is his express image, and was with him before the world began; and that he made all things *by* him, and *for* him, as his *first-born* and heir. All which is perfectly agreeable both to reason and scripture.

2dly. It is by some affirmed, that there is a plurality of persons in the Godhead, &c. to be gathered from Gen. xxix. 24. where JEHOVAH is said to rain from JEHOVAH, &c. But this text says nothing of distinct persons in JEHOVAH. If any proper distinction be intended here, it must mean, I conceive, that there are *more* JEHOVAHS than one, and not *more persons* than one in JEHOVAH: but we know there is but one JEHOVAH; and, therefore, I apprehend, it can only mean, that JEHOVAH rained from himself: Though bishop Patrick thinks here is an intimation of a plurality of persons in the Deity; yet he says, "There are *many*, both *antient* and *modern interpreters*, who think the *meaning is no more, than the Lord sent this rain from himself*, it being the manner of scripture phrase to repeat the *noun* instead of the *pronoun* (as grammarians speak); of which Cocceius gives these instances, Gen. ii. 20. 1 Sam. xii. 11, Zech. i. 16. Chrysostom did not fear to say, "This is an *idiom* of the scripture language," He adds, "Others also have observed, that, the scripture phrase being very concise, by *Lord*, in the beginning of the verse, may be meant, the *angel of the Lord*†."

It is plain, that in Zech. iii. 2. the word *angel* is to be understood in the beginning of the verse, and is natu-

† Patrick in loc.

turally supplied from the first verse; where the speaker is expressly called "the angel of the Lord, before whom Joshua stood." And so in verse 3 and 6. he is called "the angel, and the angel of the Lord." And that the noun is repeated instead of the pronoun, is manifest in very many places. The following are plain instances, "I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God," Hof. i. 7. where it is plain, that he who speaks is the same person who is called "the Lord their God." And again, "I, saith JEHOVAH, have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel," Amos iv. 11, 12. St. Paul speaks after the same manner, "The Lord grant unto him (Onesiphorus) that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day," 2 Tim. i. 18. I know it is pretended, that the scriptures often speak of one called Jehovah, who is represented as speaking to another that is also called Jehovah; but for my part, I cannot find any such place in the bible, or that hath even the *appearance* of it, except it be in two or three passages, where there is a manifest *ellipsis*, or else something is added to the name; which plainly declares, that it is not to be understood *personally* and *properly* of him to whom the name JEHOVAH is added, but it only expresses that person's *peculiar relation* to, or *union* with JEHOVAH: and in this sense CHRIST, a *person anointed*, the MAN whose name is the BRANCH, is also called

called "JEHOVAH our righteousness," and the city also, or church of God, is called JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH. But should any one think that he can make it plain, by putting an *arbitrary* meaning on a few texts, yet he would not thereby prove the point contended for; viz. that there is a plurality of divine persons in one JEHOVAH; but he would rather prove, that there are more *Jehovah's* than one, as some persons have even asserted. And, I humbly conceive, that every text brought to prove a distinction of divine persons in the Godhead, if the distinction be insisted on, proves, if any thing, a *plurality of gods* (but this must not be charged on divine revelation) for there is not one of the texts that saith of such, or such a person, when he is called God, or *Jehovah*, that he is a person, or subsistence in the Godhead; but he is called JEHOVAH, or GOD *absolutely*: though, if any but the Father be meant, as hath been observed, there is always something added that shews it is not to be understood strictly and personally. To speak, therefore, according to scripture language, and according to truth, if any *such* distinction is maintained with respect to Deity, it must be a plurality, not of, what some men call, *personal modes* or *substances* IN ONE ESSENCE; but of proper distinct substances, *beings*, or *Deities*: for let any one shew me, if he can, where Christ, or the Holy Ghost, when absolute Deity is ascribed to either of them, are mentioned as *persons* in the Godhead; or at all *distinguished* from the Father. But it is easy to understand such places by comparing them with plainer texts, where Christ is said to be one with the Father, because the Father dwelleth in him; and of the Holy

Holy Ghost, because he is the *Spirit* of God. Therefore the argument to prove a trinity of divine persons, from such ascriptions of Deity to Christ and the Holy Ghost, proves too much, and consequently proves nothing.

3dly. A TRINITY of divine persons in the Godhead, is supposed to be plainly declared, and is strongly argued from Matt. xxviii. 19. "Go ye, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." To this it may be answered, 1. The words do not *expressly* declare, that there are three persons in the Godhead; and therefore it is no *infallible* proof of it: Had that form been intended to express a trinity of divine persons in one essence, it is probable our Lord would have said so; but it seems to me that was not his design, neither do his words declare it: for he doth not say, "Baptize them in the name of GOD the FATHER, and of GOD the SON, and of GOD the HOLY GHOST, as some *modern* divines have learnt to speak. Neither doth he say in the name of the Father, and of his *co-equal* Son, and of the Holy Ghost, *three persons* in one Godhead; therefore no proof can, with certainty, be drawn from it. I conceive, then, that our Lord intended no such thing, but I rather apprehend that he designed in brief to point out, and instruct us in the knowledge of the way, manner, and author of our salvation, in all the great and essential parts of it; that is, that God the Father sent his Son, and gave him to be the Saviour of the world; and that this was the first necessary ground of our salvation, according to his eternal purpose of grace, and love to men, when he chose us in Christ.

2. That it was Christ his Son, who actually took flesh, and

and suffered, and laid down his life for us, and so reconciled us unto God the Father; which obedience of Christ unto death for us, was absolutely necessary for the expiating of our sins. 3. That it is the Holy Ghost, as given of the Father, and sent down from heaven, *by the hands of Christ the Mediator*, that must quicken and sanctify our souls: therefore, as it was equally necessary to our salvation, that the Father should give his Son, and that the Son should die for us, and that we should be united to Christ, and sanctified by the quickening agency of the Holy Spirit; hence the propriety of our being *baptized into this faith*, i. e. into the name of the Father, &c. So that the words contain a summary of *our christian faith*; for by this divine ordinance of baptism we solemnly declare our faith in God the Father as giving his Son, in Christ his Son as giving himself to die for us, and in the holy Spirit as promised and given of the Father for our sanctification; therein also we solemnly devote and engage ourselves to be the Lord's, and to serve him upon the principles of divine grace, in a way of truth unto holiness.

Thus the christian form of baptism teaches us, that the salvation of man is wholly of God, and every way worthy of God. Moreover, as it was GOD the FATHER that *sovereignly and alone* chose us *in* Christ, and gave his SON to die for us; and it was the *same* GOD, even the Father, that was *in* Christ, reconciling us unto himself; and it is also the same God and Father, that by his own Holy Spirit, through Christ, now quickens, regenerates, and sanctifies his people; therefore we are commanded to
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be baptized, *not* into the *names*, but into the NAME of the Father, &c. because it is the same God that by his Spirit, through his Son, worketh all in all.

THIS, I humbly conceive, is the most plain and probable sense of the words, so that no argument can be fairly drawn from hence to prove a Trinity of divine persons in the Godhead.

WE read of being baptized *unto Moses*, which cannot be understood of being baptized into a divine person; and, if it means the law as some suppose (but I think they are mistaken) yet neither is that a divine person; but the meaning seems to be this—that by following *Moses* at God's command, through the Red Sea, under the cloud where God was; by this act, I say, they engaged themselves to believe in, and obey *Moses as their leader*, and commander, and in him to obey God, who had appointed him to be their deliverer, and to bring them through the wilderness; and so when he had brought them through the sea, &c. it is said, "They believed the LORD and his servant *Moses*. Now, it is plain that *Moses* was here in a figure and type of Christ, "whom God hath given to be a leader and commander to the people," Isa. lv. 4. who is also that prophet, whom *Moses* said, "God would raise up unto the children of *Israel*, from among their brethren like unto him:" And as *Moses* was faithful as a servant in all God's house, and did nothing of himself but what God commanded him; so Christ the only begotten Son declares, "That he did nothing of himself, but as his Father had taught him, and as he had received a commandment from the Father," John viii. 28.

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AND thus, I conceive, that the *Israelites* being baptized into *Moses*, under the law, was a type of, and represented our being baptized into Christ, under the gospel.

AGAIN: *John* baptized with water unto repentance, for the remission of sins. Now, what did this repentance mean, but a real conversion and turning to God, that their sins might be blotted out? and he doubtless pointed out to them the way, and by what means these benefits were to be obtained; viz. by faith in Christ, and by the purifying and renewing efficacy of the Spirit, shadowed forth by water; with which Spirit he told them, "Christ would baptize his true disciples;" therefore John Baptist required of them that came to be baptized, to believe the necessity of repentance towards God; and for the remission of sins, he directed them to believe on Christ that should come after him; and thus they were baptized into the faith of the doctrine of God, and of the way of salvation by Christ Jesus.

To believe, therefore, that God the Father sent his Son, and that he was in his Son reconciling the world unto himself; that Christ the Son of God died for us, and rose again; and that the Holy Ghost is sent down from heaven to regenerate and purify our souls; and that we cannot be saved in any other way; but of the FATHER, through the SON, by the HOLY SPIRIT, doth, I apprehend, take in the full meaning of the words of that scripture.

OBJECTION I. Is not baptism a solemn act of divine worship paid to that person, or persons into whose name we are baptized?

ANSWER. I. IT seems that this is not necessarily included in it, nor principally intended by it; for being

baptized into *Moses*, was not paying him divine worship; it seems to mean no more than faith in him as God's servant, whom he had chosen and sent to lead his people out of *Egypt*, &c. but to God whose servant he was, it may be considered as an act of divine worship; for when they were baptized unto *Moses*, they were baptized unto God to obey and follow him, who spake to, and commanded them by the mouth of his servant *Moses*; and therefore they are said to believe both in *Jehovah* and in *Moses* his servant; so it is in the *Hebrew* בִּיהוָה וּבְמֹשֶׁה, *Exod. xiv. 31.*

ANSW. 2. THE *Jewish* people of old are said to bow down, and at the same time to worship *Jehovah*, and the king," 1 Chron. xxix. 20. Here is no *express* distinction made as to the worship paid to *Jehovah*, and the king; and yet it is certain they were not equal persons; but the people well knew, that they did not by that act worship both with equal and supreme worship, but *Jehovah as the living God*; and *David the king*, as his anointed servant and representative, who also therein typified Christ, as God's king in *Zion*.

OBJECTION 2. BUT doth not the NAME declare that Father, Son, and Spirit, are three proper and *co-equal* persons in one divine essence?

ANSWER 1. IT appears from the above instance of *Moses*; that our being baptized into the *name* of the Father, Son, and Spirit, is no proof of their being three persons properly equal and *co-essential*. *Moses* appears also to be a type of CHRIST, when the *Jewish* church was baptized unto him.

ANSW. 2. THE apostle *Paul* joins his spirit with the name of Christ, as engaged in executing the censure
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upon the incestuous *Corinthian*. His words are observable,
 " In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and my spirit,
 with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ," 1 Cor. v. 4.
 The name of Christ cannot, I think, be here extended to
Paul, as if he was equal with Christ. It is certain, that in
 several respects Christ and *Paul* were unequal, and yet they
 are both joined together as one in this church censure;
 therefore the name in the form of baptism may not in the
 same sense be applied to the Father and Son, nor may the
 Holy Spirit be considered as another person distinct
 from God; any more than *Paul's* spirit may be considered
 as distinct from HIM; nor may the power of Christ be re-
 ckoned as another person distinct from *Paul* or Christ,
merely because they are all mentioned together on one and
 the same occasion. If then the casting out of the church
 may be done in the name, and by the power of persons un-
 equal, &c. is it impossible to believe that they should be ad-
 mitted into the church by being baptized into the name
 of persons unequal? But it doth not therefore follow
 that they might be baptized into the name of *Paul*,
 because he was not as *Moses*, a type of Christ, neither
 was he crucified for us: Moreover, when *Paul* mentions
his own spirit, it is plain that he had no power to do any
 thing but what he had received from Christ. For all his
 authority and sufficiency was from Christ, and yet he
 mentions himself together with him, as one by whom also
 the censure was to be inflicted.

I CONCEIVE, then, that by our christian baptism we
 profess to believe, *not in the manner of God's subsisting*,
 but in the author of our salvation, and in the way
 and manner of it, i. e. of God the Father, through

Christ his Son, and by his Spirit; for the Father's everlasting love, whereby he elected and gave us grace in Christ before the world began, could not of *itself* have saved us, had it proceeded no further; therefore he sent his Son to take flesh, bear our sin, and be made a curse for us, that a way might be opened for our return to God in righteousness: but neither could this grace of redemption have saved us, had it stopped here; for our natures might still have remained filthy, and our minds at enmity with God: therefore God also promised, and hath sent his Spirit to destroy that enmity of the carnal mind, and so to quicken and purify our souls, by revealing and forming Christ in us.

As then the *sanctifying* work of the Spirit is an essential part of our salvation, and as necessary for our final happiness, as the *Father's* love in electing and giving his Son; and as the *Son's* love in giving himself and laying down his life for us; it is fit and proper that we be baptized *into this faith*: for we must of necessity, in order to salvation, be partakers of sanctification by the Spirit of God, and of justification by the blood of the Son of God, as well as be the objects of the Father's everlasting grace and love; which is the fountain of all our blessings, and continues to follow us, and runs through the whole of our salvation, both in redemption, by the death of his Son, and in our sanctification, by the renewing efficacy of his Spirit; for man's complete and full salvation is ever ascribed to one divine person in this manner; that is to say, to God the Father by the Son, through the Spirit, *both* which are said to be the *gift* of the FATHER, for this very purpose; *in* and *by* whom

whom he is said to work all things, both in creation and redemption.

THAT the form of baptism doth not express nor intend three divine co-equal persons in Jehovah, is, I conceive, further manifest from hence; because when we are baptized into the name of Christ, the Son of God, we are baptized into him as a person suffering, dying, and rising again. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death," Rom. vi. 2. And this can never be applied to Christ as God, but only as man, who, as such, is the Mediator between God and men, 1 Tim. ii. 5. And if we are not baptized into Christ as having suffered in the flesh for us, we are not rightly baptized into his name at all: but this cannot relate to him as JEHOVAH, a divine person; and therefore it ought not to be thus understood in the form of baptism.

AGAIN; If we enquire from other scriptures, who the Father is, we are constantly told that HE, and HE ONLY, is the LIVING and TRUE GOD, 1 Cor. viii. 6. John xvii. 3. 1 Theff. i. 9. If we enquire who the SON is, the scripture always speaks of him, and testifies that he is a person, *begotten* of God, his first-born, the image of God; that God sent him into the world to save sinners, and put his Spirit upon him; and that he died and rose again. Therefore when we are baptized into his name, it cannot, I think, be understood of another distinct co-equal person in the Godhead.

IF we further ask, who the HOLY SPIRIT is, we shall find from the most plain and express scriptures, that he is
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the *Spirit* of the ONE LIVING and TRUE GOD, and therefore is not to be understood as another person distinct from God, unless we will put a *figurative* sense on those many and express scriptures where the Holy Ghost is thus declared to be the Spirit of God.

SURELY, it is not right to put a forced and unnatural meaning on the *plainer parts of scripture*, in order to make *two or three more obscure texts* appear to speak the contrary. Nothing can be more fully and plainly declared in scripture than this, that there is but ONE God, and that Christ is his Son, and the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of that one God. But the plain sense of all these truths is intirely overthrown by making the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT to be three co-equal and co-essential persons in one divine essence.

I INFER, therefore, according to the plain doctrines of scripture, that there is but one God the Father, and that *all things* are of that one God, who hath reconciled us to himself BY Jesus Christ, 2 Cor. v. 18. "Having *predestinated* us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of HIS will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," Eph. i. 11. "And you hath HE quickened (by his Spirit) who were dead in trespasses and sins," chap. ii. 1. "WHO hath saved and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works, but according to HIS own purpose and grace which was given us in CHRIST JESUS before the world began," 2 Tim. i. 9. "For after that the love and kindness of GOD OUR SAVIOUR towards man appeared, not by works of righteousness which

which we have done, but according to HIS mercy HE saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour," &c. Tit. iii. 4, 5, 6.

Do not these scriptures plainly declare, that it is one divine person, even God the Father, that saves us; only the manner in which he doth it, is at the same time plainly declared, viz. by his Son's redeeming blood, and through his Spirit's sanctifying power, that we might be saved in a way of righteousness and true holiness; for which cause the apostle prays that "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, may be with all saints," 2 Cor. xiii. 14.

Is it not plain that Christ, in this text also, is not spoken of as a divine person in Deity, but as man and Mediator in union with God; and the grace here mentioned is that which God the Father gave him, and he received for us before the world began, as in 2 Tim. i. 9. and from him as head of the church we are said to receive it, and *grace for grace*, John i. 16. By the communion of the Holy Ghost we are, I conceive, to understand the *communication* of that grace, that we may have fellowship with the Father, and the Son, by his own Spirit. And this, I doubt not, is what the Spirit receives from Christ, as Christ from the Father for us; and thus it all flows from the love of the one living and true God.

LIKEWISE to the same purpose speaks the apostle John, saying, "Grace and peace be to you from him WHO IS, AND WHO WAS, AND WHO IS TO COME (that is, from God the Father) and from the seven spirits which are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ," &c. For the same reason
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the Father, Son, and Spirit are mentioned in the form of baptism; not as pointing out three divine co-equal persons in the Godhead; but as describing and declaring to us the nature and manner, and author of our salvation; which is wholly of God through his own Spirit, by the death of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and therefore we are baptized into this faith.

THIS, I apprehend, takes in the full meaning of our Lord's words in the form of baptism: And it seems to me probable, that the apostles, taking the *sense* of the words, *baptized*, only in the name of the Lord Jesus. See Acts ii. 38. viii. 16. x. 68. xix. 5. and if so, then the sense of them is sufficiently expressed by being baptized into the faith of Christ, as *Him* whom God hath exalted, and given to be the Saviour of the world: for faith in Christ evidently implies and includes, both faith in God the Father, and in the holy Ghost, as the promise of the Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6thly. ANOTHER text on which very great stress is laid in this controversy, is in I. John v. 7. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the FATHER, the WORD, and the HOLY GHOST, and these three are ONE."

I SHALL take no notice of the *objections* that have been raised against the *validity* of *this text*: but admitting it to be authentic, I observe, that the apostle doth not say, they are three *persons*, much less three *co-equal persons*; neither doth he say they are three in ONE divine ESSENCE, or GODHEAD; which seems to be what our opponents would infer from the text, and are contending for: but the words will fairly admit of a different meaning; for they may be

said

said to be three *in witnessing*, or *three testifiers*, without being three *proper persons*. Nor is the *spirit* of a person (as the Spirit of God certainly is) ever understood, in common language, to mean *another distinct person*; for when we speak of the *spirit* of a man, we never mean *another person* in distinction from *that man*: and yet the spirit of a man, yea his *conscience*, which is but a faculty or power of his spirit, is said to bear witness, and that with the man himself: besides, the next verse mentions three other witnesses, and it is certain they are not three persons; the *water* and the *blood* cannot be proper persons: therefore the ascription of *witnessing* to the Father, Son, and Spirit, is no proof of their being *three proper persons*, much less of three divine *co-essential* persons. Likewise, in verses 9, 10, 11. the apostle (speaking evidently of the same testimony) calls it again and again, *the witness of God*, which he hath witnessed of his Son; and it is plain, that this is but the witness of *one person* only, even of the Father: neither doth it follow, because they are said jointly to bear witness, that they are *one* in essence; for our Lord joins his disciples, as witnesses of him, together with the Holy Spirit: "When (saith he) the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me; and ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning," John xv. 26, 27. The apostles also issued out their decrees to the churches jointly in their own name, and in the name of the Holy Ghost, for so the decree runs, "It seemed good unto the Holy Ghost, and to us," Acts xv. 28. Therefore it is no cer-

tain proof, because they are said to witness *together*, that they are co-equal and one in essence.

OBJECTION. BUT the text declares that these three are ONE, that is, *one essence*, or being : so in John x. 30. Christ saith, I and my Father are *one*, *unum*, *one thing*.

ANSWER. THE *Greek* pronoun in the neuter gender, whereby the *oneness* is expressed, doth not necessarily mean one substance, essence, or being: for our Lord often makes use of the word, where it cannot possibly be so understood, as in John xvii. 11. he saith, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be *one*, *one*, *unum*, as *we* are : And again, in ver. 21. "That they all may be *one*, *one*, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be *one*, *one*, in us : " and again, ver. 22. "That they may be *one*, *one*, even as we are *one*, *one*."

IF then this word doth necessarily mean that they are ONE in the divine essence and Deity, it will prove too much ; for the same phrase is applied to *Christ* and his church as one, who together with God the Father are said to be *one* : Now this cannot be a *oneness* of *essence* or being, but must needs mean a union between *distinct beings*, and also of *different natures* : It is also worthy of notice, that Christ doth not once say, as *thou*, and I, and the *Spirit* are *one* ; which by the way seems to imply, that the Spirit is not a proper person, but is, as we say, necessarily included in the person of God the Father : and therefore this criticism is, in my humble opinion, both unnatural and unjust ; and by comparing the several passages together, as cited above, where this form of expression is made use of, it only proves that thereby is meant to express a union between
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tween two, or more distinct beings or persons ; or that they are agreed, and act together in one and the same thing.

I THINK, therefore, with *Beza*, that it only means *one in witnessing*, and is not intended to express any other union or oneness. That learned expositor on these words, Οὗτοι ἓν εἰσι, *these three are one*, explains it thus, “ i. e. they so intirely agree, as if they were but *one witness*, though with respect to the essence *ουσια*, they are truly one, yet (in my opinion) the apostle doth not in this place speak of the essence. Moreover the *Complutensian manuscript* reads οὗτοι ἓν εἰσι, i. e. *they agree in one*, as it is read in the verse following *.” *Beza*, then, though he supposes Father, Word, and Spirit to be one in essence, yet he declares it to be his opinion, that the apostle did not intend it here, nor is it the meaning of the text.

Now, in order to the right understanding of this text, let us consider it in connexion with others that treat of the same subject. In John viii. 17, 18. Christ, speaking to the *Jews*, saith, “ It is written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.” Again, chap. v. 36, 37. he saith, “ I have greater witness than that of *John*, for the *works* which the Father hath given me to finish, the same *works* that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me : And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me.” Here Christ ascribes witnessing to two proper per-

* Οὗτοι ἓν εἰσι ἢ οὗτοι, id est, ita prorsus consentiunt, ac si unus testis essent, uti revera unum sunt, si *ουσια* spectes, sed de illa (ut mihi quidem videtur) non agitur hoc in loco—sed et Complutensis editio legit οὗτοι ἓν εἰσι, id est, in unum conveniunt, uti legitur in sequenti membro. *Beza* in loc.

sons, viz. to the Father and himself; and at the same time he ascribes witnessing to that which was not a proper person, i. e. to the works which he did: and to whom are these works personally ascribed? He himself tells us, chap. xiv. 10. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, HE doth the works."

THUS the Father's witnessing by a voice from heaven, and the works which Christ wrought, are represented as two distinct testifiers, and are said to bear witness of him: but, with respect to personality, the witnesses are declared to be *one*, and the *same person*, even God the Father; therefore it only respects the *different manner* wherein this witness was borne to Christ, viz. by a *voice* from heaven the Father bore witness to him as his Son; and again by the divine works and miracles which he wrought in, and by Christ, he in another manner bore witness of him; but we do not, I think, any where read of the Holy Spirit witnessing to Christ, till after his death and resurrection (though he wrought all his miracles by the power of the Spirit); for the Holy Ghost was not thus given to witness of Christ, till after he was glorified; wherefore he saith, "When the Holy Ghost is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, HE shall testify of me:" But when the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the apostles, that under his divine influence they might work all manner of miracles, and bear witness of Christ; yet we are certain it was God the Father who by his Spirit bore witness of him, speaking and acting in and by the apostles, as it is written, "GOD also bearing them

them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to HIS OWN WILL," Heb. ii. 4. Thus the Spirit of their Father spake in them, and wrought miracles by them; therefore God the Father, by giving his Holy Spirit to the apostles, both in measure and manner, according to his own will, did by his Spirit enable them to work miracles, and powerfully to testify of his Son Jesus. And whereas God hath given to Christ the Spirit without measure, that he, as Head of the church, may pour out the Spirit upon all, and every one of his members, according to the will of God; therefore the works are likewise ascribed personally to Christ, "for I will not (saith the apostle) dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient both by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God," Rom. xv. 18, 19. So that the witnessing spoken of in the text, is, in point of personality, to be referred to God the Father, and to his Son Jesus Christ; but the Spirit is properly mentioned, because of the divers manners in which God hath borne witness of his Son; and also because the divine works which Christ immediately wrought in his own person, or by his apostles, GOD the FATHER wrought them by his infinite and eternal Spirit.

If we further inquire from the scriptures, who the Father, and Word, and Spirit are; we are expressly told, that the Father is the only living and true God, and that to us there is but one God the Father: Consequently where-ever the FATHER is mentioned, it must be understood in agreement

ment with other scriptures that speak plainly of him ; and so in the text under consideration.—Of the Word we read, that he was in the beginning with God, and that he is the *only begotten of the FATHER* ; and therefore he is evidently distinguished from the one living and true God the Father : unless we mean to make two supreme Deities, which is denied by all. And when we read of the Holy Ghost, he is declared to be the Spirit of God the Father, and is of him given to his Son Jesus Christ, and by *Christ* to the church ; therefore, in my opinion, the text cannot, consistent with the doctrine and truth of scripture, be made to speak of three co-equal and co-essential persons in the Godhead. Here also we may observe, that in Matt. xxviii. 19. 1 John v. 7. and 2 Cor. xiii. 14. where the sacred *three* are mentioned together, one of them is called the FATHER in two of the texts, and in the other he is *absolutely* called GOD : therefore it is most reasonable to suppose even from those very texts, that the FATHER *personally*, and GOD *absolutely*, mean exactly the same ; and that he is in all those scriptures distinguished personally from Christ, for he is the *Son of God* ; but not personally from the Holy Ghost, because he is the *Spirit of God* ; so that in point of personality the Spirit is included in the Father ; but Christ is distinguished from him, as his only begotten Son, who is the image of God. I apprehend also, that neither scripture nor reason will warrant us to conceive of the GODHEAD *as begotten*, in any proper personal *mode* whatever.

7. No distinction of divine persons in the Godhead can be proved, nor, in my humble opinion, reasonably
inferred

inferred from Matt. iii. 16, 17. for we cannot suppose that Christ, as a divine person, was baptized, nor as a divine person could he *receive* or need to be anointed by the Holy Ghost; but as the Son of God incarnate, he was made under the law; *as such*, the Father bore witness of him; and, *as such*, he poured out his Spirit upon him: But it was God's own essential Spirit, and not *another divine person*, with which he anointed his holy child Jesus.

AGAIN, some, it may be, will suppose that this point is clearly revealed in John xvi. 7, 13—15. where Christ saith, "If I go not away the Comforter will not come, but if I depart I will send him unto you, and when he is come, he shall convince the world of sin, &c. he shall lead you into all truth, for *he shall not speak of himself*, but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, &c. he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Now, supposing that we cannot obviate every objection that might be raised from this, and some other difficult scriptures; yet we conceive that the doctrine pleaded for will be sufficiently manifest, by shewing that these obscure texts are capable of being explained consistent with the *analogy of faith*, without supposing them to be meant of a *plurality* of divine persons, especially as the whole evidence of the truth of the *unity of the divine personality*, rests on the *most plain and express* passages of the divine word; and not on the doubtful meaning of a few obscure texts, which I apprehend is the case with the contrary *hypothesis* of our opponents. With regard to the text under consideration, *personal characters* and *acts*, as hath been already observed, are properly ascribed to the Holy Ghost, *because*
he

he is the Spirit of the LIVING GOD: He is also to be distinguished from Christ, because he is *originally* the Spirit of another person, even of the *Father ONLY*; and is by him *given* to Christ: it was proper, therefore, when he came to testify of Christ, that he should not speak of himself, but of Christ only, who is the *alone Mediator* and head of the church, into whose hands God the Father hath given all things, and constituted him Lord of all; therefore when the Holy Ghost was sent as the *Spirit of truth*, it was meet and necessary that he should take of Christ, who is the true and only Mediator, and *the true and only sacrifice* for sin, and in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell. I think the *Arians* from this text, who are also zealous in maintaining a distinct *proper personality* between the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, attempt to prove, that the Spirit is a *created being*, *inferior* both to the Father, and the Son: If indeed we adhere to the *bare* mode, and letter of expression here made use of, where it is said, *he shall not speak of himself*, but *whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak*; there may seem to be an appearance of it; but I conceive the words do not prove the spirit to be a distinct person from the Father at all; much less that he is inferior to the Son: his work was to reveal and form Christ in the hearts of his people, to fill them out of his fulness, and to testify of Christ, "whose blood alone cleanseth from all sin:" therefore the Spirit is said not to speak of himself, &c.

AND we have proved already from other scriptures, that the Holy Ghost is *properly* the Spirit of God the Father; therefore, however he is represented as sent forth, and
 acting

acting in the works of creation, and of man's salvation, he is not to be personally distinguished from God, whose Spirit he is : but the Son is another person distinct from the Father ; therefore the Spirit of the Father may well be considered in distinction from the Son, by the most strong personal characters ; for personally it is the Father himself speaking, and acting *in* his Son, and *for* his Son, by his Spirit. And we have already observed, that as the Spirit of truth he must needs receive of Christ's, who of God is made all things to the church : Consequently the Spirit doth not speak of himself, but as he hears, or as he is given and sent by Christ the head of the church ; that they might be filled out of *Christ's fulness*, and grace for grace : But that the Holy Spirit is not a created being, is, I think, quite plain, because he is the Spirit of God : and that he is not *inferior* to Christ is, I conceive, manifest from hence, because *he received* the Spirit from the Father. Now, if the Father gave his Spirit to Christ, that by him he might work miracles, quicken the dead, &c. the Spirit can never be supposed to be a *Being* inferior to Christ : " For without all contradiction the less is blessed of the " better," Heb. vii. 7.

THESE, I think, are the principal texts that are usually brought to prove ; that Father, Son, and Spirit, are three distinct divine persons in the Godhead ; and if there be any other not cited, what hath been observed on those already mentioned, is, we conceive, a sufficient answer to any objections that may be raised from them. And I hope it hath been made to appear, that not any one of them nor all of them put together, do expressly, or by natural

consequence prove, that Father, Son, and Spirit, are three *proper* divine persons : Rather they may, and must be otherwise explained, in order to understand them in a consistency with other express scriptures ; for nothing can be more plain than this, that there is but ONE GOD the FATHER, and but ONE MEDIATOR between God and men, the man CHRIST JESUS ; and that the *Holy Ghost* is the SPIRIT of GOD the FATHER. It is likewise further manifest, that God the Father created the worlds, and redeemed mankind, and governs, and rules, all things by his eternal Spirit, in and through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord : To whom be glory for ever. Amen.

SOME writers, especially of late years, have endeavored to prove a *Trinity of divine persons*, in one Godhead, from the *emblematical figure* of the *cherubim* : But it remains to this day a problem and a doubt with the most learned divines, who, or what, were represented and meant by the cherubim. Some say angels, who are represented by *Peter* as earnestly desiring to look into the mysteries of the gospel, 1 Pet. i. 12. And it seems also from what *Paul* declares, Eph. iii. 10. that the *manifold wisdom of God* is opened, and *made known to them*, by what God hath done in and for his church, his redeemed from among men : Some suppose they were *emblems of gospel ministers* as labouring in the word and doctrine with great diligence, zeal, and patience. But it is asserted by others, that *they represented THREE DIVINE PERSONS in the GODHEAD, with the man Christ in union with the second person*. Their chief reasons for this opinion are, I think, 1. Because *they were placed in the most holy part of the temple* (which was a figure of heaven

heaven) with their faces looking towards the *mercy seat*.

2. *Before their faces also the atonement was to be made.*

3. *Because the face of a man was united to that of a lion, being one of the three.* For my own part I do not pretend to explain with certainty this *mystical hieroglyphic*, nor determine which of the explanations given above, or whether either of them be right. Perhaps weighty objections may be raised against every one of them; *the mystery of God is not yet finished, and therefore it is probable, that every thing relating to the church is not so fully understood by us as it will be, before the end come.*

BUT I think it not probable that the doctrine of the Trinity should be *only* represented by mysterious figures, and their meaning not explained to us, nor plainly revealed in other places of the sacred word. And it is very hard to reconcile also with this interpretation, Rev. iv. 7, 8. where they are represented as four distinct separate figures, and *the man as not united to the lion*. They are also, chap. v. 8, 9. represented as falling down before the Lamb, together with the elders, and saying, "Thou art worthy, for *thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,*" &c. Whence it should seem, that they rather represented some of the human race. But if it be admitted that they were intended to represent JEHOVAH, and the man Christ in union with the Godhead; yet I conceive not three distinct persons in the Godhead; for the man Christ, when he was here upon earth, never once mentioned his being united to any divine person, but to one only; and that he always called the FATHER: and his apostles constantly represent that mystery in the same manner. Moreover, in

Rev. iv. 7. as is above noted, the man is represented as not united to either of the emblems; therefore if it be meant to give us an idea of God and Christ united, I apprehend the most probable meaning of it is this, 1. That God in his own *absolute Deity* is represented by the *bull*, an emblem of *fire*; for so God is in his absolute being to all sinners: he is and ever will be in his pure Godhead a consuming fire to the ungodly and wicked, his enemies. 2. The SAME MOST HOLY GOD, *in a Mediator*, looks upon fallen men in love and mercy; and here he is represented as redeeming and reconciling them to himself in, and by the man Christ Jesus; and that not from a necessity of nature, but in a way of holy sovereignty, for he saith, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy:" God then, *in Christ*, may be here represented *as the light*, by the emblem of the *lion*: for from this discovery of God in Christ, *light of hope and salvation* comes to fallen men: Hence Christ, as Mediator, is called the *light*; and God in him is the light and salvation of his people. 3. The SAME GOD, viewing his people *as redeemed*, and as having their sins expiated by the death of his Son; he then quickens and puts *new life* into their souls, and *exalts* and brings them to himself: Under this character he may be represented by the *eagle*, an emblem of the *wind*, and of the *Holy Spirit*, in his quickening and renewing agency on the hearts of his people.

THUS the different faces of those figures may well be understood, not to represent different *persons* in the Godhead, but *one divine person only*, as he stands related to, and respects man *in different views and relations*: for this is certain,

certain, that out of Christ God cannot be approached, but is a consuming fire to sinners. "I will be sanctified, saith God, in all that come near me; and no man, saith Christ, cometh unto the Father, but by me:" but in Christ God is well pleased, yea, he invites sinners to return unto him by that new and living way which he himself hath opened, and consecrated for us: and he also graciously receives, pardons, and saves all that by *Christ* come unto him. And again, for Christ's sake, he quickens their souls by his eternal Spirit, which also he hath promised and given to all believers in Christ, who turn to God by him. Therefore it is *one God* even the Father, by *one Lord* and *Mediator* his Son Jesus Christ, through the agency of one Spirit, his own Holy Spirit, that worketh all in all.

THE supposition, then, that this sacred figure represents the covenant engagements between three divine persons, appears not to be well grounded: but if the above representation be true, this indeed seems to appear from it, that the man *Christ* was with JEHOVAH his FATHER, and in union, and one with him, before he was actually incarnate: and that he was then given to be a covenant for the people, and that the covenant was made with him, as their surety and federal head.

2. IT is affirmed by some, that the *Hebrew* word פֶּנִי, *peni*, or פְּנִים *penim*, proves a plurality of persons in the Godhead. That *peni* sometimes signifies a person or persons, is not denied; but it most properly means the *visible face*, surface, or aspect of any thing: and is applied to the heavens, the earth, &c. and when applied to one intelligent being,

being, it often means his face or person : it is frequently rendered *in the sight*, or *presence* of any one.

THIS word is commonly used in the plural, for the face of *one single person only* ; but is I believe, never used to express a plurality of persons in the Godhead. If any man think otherwise, I should be glad to know the scripture where it is so used ; and if it be used for *one single human person*, why it may not be also used for *one single divine person* ?

MR. PARKHURST says, “ It is often used (*in plural*) for the *face* of a man, and sometimes for that of a brute, plainly on account of the *several profiles* of which they consist, and which look different ways*.” Gen. iv. 5. and xi. 28. Exod. xxxiv. 29. Ezek. i. 10. Amos v. But that it means one person only when applied to JEHOVAH, is, I think, manifest from hence, 1. because the *Hebrew* noun, though *plural*, is always, by the *seventy Greek* translators, rendered *singular*. Now had they judged it to mean more than one person, they would certainly have rendered the word plural : but perhaps some may have the boldness to assert that they were either ignorant of the original (though it was their own native tongue) or were unfaithful translators. But neither of these is probable, seeing those *seventy Jews* were chosen by their rulers and chief men to execute this work, at the request of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, king of *Egypt* : It was also begun and finished above 200 years before Christ was born. But that which weighs with me most is, that the apostles have often cited the *Greek* translation ; and we know that their testimony is true. St. Paul hath again

* Parkhurst's Lex.

and again, in one chapter, translated the *Hebrew plural*, יְהוָה by the *Greek singular* ἰσχυρός. Compare 2 Cor. iii. 7, 13. with Exod. xxxiv. 29, 30, 33, 34. But notwithstanding the apostle's authority, a late learned divine hath, I think, told us, that the very same word *peni*, rendered *my presence*, Exod. xxxiii. 34. means the three divine persons.

It is used in a plural form indifferently, both for the face of God, and for the face of a man. I will mention but two places out of a multitude that might be cited: See Gen. xxxii. 30. *Jacob* said, "I have seen *God faces to face*;" and chap. xxxiii. 10. speaking to *Esau*, he saith, "I have seen *thy face*, as though I had seen the *face* of God." Therefore its being used in a plural form, is no proof of its meaning a plurality of faces or persons.

3. THE grand argument now made use of, and insisted on by many, in proof of a plurality of co-essential and co-equal persons in JEHOVAH, is the *Hebrew plural noun* ALEIM*, God. There are, however, many learned men, who say that the *Hebrew noun*, though of a plural termination, is not of plural signification, especially when meaning the true God. The learned *Buxtorf* tells us, when this plural name "is used for the only true God, it hath not a plural sense, but a singular †." *Bythner* also declares, that this name of God "is almost constantly put in the plural after the manner or idiom of the *Hebrew*

* The word is usually read according to the points *Elohim*, but I prefer *ALEIM*, as it exactly expresses the *Hebrew* name, and is, I conceive, of easier pronunciation.

† Singularem sensum habet de unico et vero Deo usurpatum. *Buxtorf's lex.*

tongue, and that to express his *supreme majesty* and glory*." Even bishop *Beveridge* will not lay any stress upon it: "God (saith he) being so frequently called ALEIM, and saying in the first of *Genesis*, *Let us make man*, may denote a plurality, but cannot convince any gainsayer of a Trinity of persons in the sacred Deity. And the angels crying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts, will be a stronger argument for the supereminent sanctity, than for the sacred Trinity in the divine nature †."

"SOME (saith Dr. *Edwards*) would have us believe there lurks a mystery in this noun plural ALEIM, applied to a verb singular, as if these words denoted to us the *Trinity* of persons in the Godhead, and the *unity* of the divine essence. But this notion, I believe, will prove to be too subtle, if you consider that the word ALEIM carries with it no more the *signification* of plurality, by virtue of its being plural, than ADONIM (which is generally confessed to have no plural signification) or the word BAALIM, or than the word BEHEMOTH, which you will read with a singular adjunct in Job xiv. 10. but perhaps it is there in a plural form, to express the bigness and vastness of that beast which is meant by it, as if it were made of many beasts; but the main thing which persuades me that in the form and termination of ALEIM, the sacred Trinity was not designed, is this, the third person in this undivided Trinity is called the *Spirit of ALEIM* in the

* Ex consuetudine hujus lingue fere semper pluraliter ponitur, idque ad ejus summam majestatem, et singularem gloriam indicandam. Bythner's *Lyra Prophetica*.

† Beveridge on the 39 Articles. 3d edit. page 46.

verse after my text; whereas that would be absurd and improper, if the whole sacred Trinity were designedly signified to us by that word: for how can the *Holy Ghost* be said to be the spirit of the three persons, when he himself is one of those *persons*? This, I think, is very convincing." He goes on, and adds, "They, therefore, are in the right who tells us, that this is the idiom of the holy tongue; and that this word, being placed in the plural, denotes, the greatness, the excellency, the power of God, as indeed the origination itself of the word ALEIM imports."

"I THINK, then, we may best of all acquiesce in the judgment of those learned men, who conclude that it is the way of the *Hebrews* to join sometimes a noun plural with a verb singular (as in the *Greek* tongue verbs singular are coupled with nouns neuter in the plural number) and more especially ALEIM is so used here and is joined with created *."

It is also asserted by the learned Mr. *Pool*, in his Annotations, that ALEIM is of singular and not plural comprehension. When *Israel* said of the calf, "These be thy gods," i. e. saith he, "This is thy God, the plural number being put for the singular, as it is usual in this case. And in 1 Sam. xxviii. 13. *Gods*, i. e. a *God*, a divine person, &c. she useth the plural number *Gods*, either after the manner of the *Hebrew language*, which commonly useth that word of one person; or after the language and custom of the heathens. But the whole coherence

* Dr. Edwards's Exercitations on Gen. i. 1.

threws, that it was but one : for *Saul* desired but *one*, ver. 11. and he enquires, and the woman answers only of *one*", ver. 14.*

BUT as there are many, especially in this day, that lay the greatest stress upon it; and from thence would certainly conclude that there is a proper personal plurality in *JEHOVAH*, I shall attempt to speak a few things more on the subject.

AND, 1. It is objected, that *ALEIM* is in a few places joined with plural verbs, participles, and pronouns : This is allowed, and it serves to prove that *ALEIM* is plural in its form ; and that it may by a proper grammatical construction be connected with adjuncts and verbs plural : and this, as I suppose, is all that it serves to prove : for if this plural noun is much oftener connected with adjectives, pronouns, and verbs singular, which cannot be denied, and that, as I conceive, above a hundred to one ; then these singular adjuncts do more abundantly prove, and that by the difference of a hundred to one, that *ALEIM* is singular in sense, and signification, and not plural.

CAN any person suppose, that the evidence of a hundred witnesses against one, that seems to differ from them, where all are admitted to be equally true and faithful, should be rejected in preference to one single evidence ? I think nobody in a court of equity would allow it. But it will be said, that in the present case the single evidence is infallibly true : This is granted ; but it must be remembered also, that the other ninety-nine are as infallible as that one ; consequently they cannot be supposed to disagree

* Pool's Annotations.

between themselves, but only *appear* so to us. In order therefore to reconcile them, is it not much more rational and necessary to interpret the *meaning* of the *one* by the *ninety and nine*, then *vice versa*.

I INFER, therefore, that ALEIM's being sometimes connected with plural pronouns, &c. doth not prove that it means a *personal* plurality.

2. IT is affirmed that ALEIM hath a plural signification, because more than one are sometimes comprehended and meant by it, as in Psalm lxxxii. 6. "I have said, ye are ALEIM;" "this usage fixes the plurality, &c." if this be admitted, yet it will not prove that it hath always a plural sense; for *peri* may be used sometimes for several faces and persons, but most commonly for one only; so ADONI for several Lords, but most generally for one only. Besides, the above passage may be understood *distributively*, as if he had said, Ye, that is, *each of* of you judges, is ALEIM; for so the word is applied to one, Exod. vii. 1. "And JEHOVAH said to Moses,—I have made *thee* ALEIM unto Pharaoh." And it cannot be said there is more than one person intended here: It is used also in a plural form for *one angel*, Judges xiii. 22. for *one calf*, Exod. xxxii. 31. for *one idol*, as Dagon, Judg. xvi. 17. and in many other places for one single object or person; therefore it hath not always a *plural sense*: but rather, when applied to the TRUE GOD, or to any *person*, or thing relating to God, or *representing* him whether true or false, it always has, I conceive, a *fixed singular sense*: but it is nothing strange that when *many such objects*, or representatives of

God, are mentioned together, as in Psalm lxxxii. 6. it should then be understood of plural signification.

3. SOME may yet attempt to prove it by a *sylogism*, thus :
 “ The word ALEIM, when applied to the true and only object of divine worship, means two or more persons with *distinct understanding and will* : But the sacred pages in very many places of the old testament prove that ALEIM is JEHOVAH, or pure Deity only ; therefore there must be in the one undivided JEHOVAH two or more persons with *distinct understanding and will*.”

ANSWER. I CANNOT grant the *major*, much less the *minor* ; therefore the consequence is not allowed to follow. With respect to the *major* : I humbly conceive, that the supreme object of divine worship, even when expressed by ALEIM, is always declared to be but ONE, not two or three : JEHOVAH is one, God is one ; not two as the object of worship, which oneness arises both from the unity of person and essence in God : for in my ideas, to distinguish or divide the Deity into more persons than one, is of necessity to make more objects of divine worship, and consequently more gods than one : But if the *major* were admitted, the *minor* would not follow for there may be two personally united, and yet not pure Deity only. A man's soul and body (two distinct natures) are intimately united, and yet he is not pure spirit only. We know also that the man Christ Jesus is personally united to JEHOVAH and one with God ; yet the Father and Son are not pure Deity only. This cannot be denied, therefore the *minor* doth not follow.

BEFORE

BEFORE we proceed further, I would premise, that by *personal* distinctions in JEHOVAH our opponents do not mean what may be *figuratively* and *improperly* so called; that is to say, they do not mean the essential wisdom and power of God, as in Psalm lxvi. 7. and Prov. iii. 19. by which he is said to create and govern the world; to which personal acts may be, and often are ascribed: for this we allow; but they intend, if I rightly understand their meaning, persons *literally* and *properly* so called; that is, three distinct intelligent spirits, or subsistencies, or agents, necessarily existing in one *divine essence*: And this some have engaged to prove from very many texts of scripture: but, in my humble opinion, the direct contrary may be proved from most, if not from all of them.

Now, as the sense of all these passages (respecting the point in debate) rests on *one* and the *same* basis, it will be sufficient to consider a few of them only; for if these do not prove the plural personality contended for, neither will any one, nor all of them put together. The texts which I shall select out of the sacred scripture for this purpose are these that follow: "Then spake ALEIM to Moses, and said, I am JEHOVAH," Exod. vi. 2. "The ALEIM which shall answer by fire, HE is the ALEIM. JEHOVAH HE is the ALEIM," 1 Kings xviii. 24, 39. "O come let us worship, and bow down, and kneel before JEHOVAH our maker, for he is our ALEIM," Psalm xc. 6, 7. "Shew me JEHOVAH, thy ways, teach me thy paths, lead me in thy truth, and teach me, for *thou* art the ALEIM of my salvation," Psalm xxv. 4, 5. "He that sacrificeth to any ALEIM

ALEIM except to JEHOVAH only, shall be anathematized," Exod. xxii. 19.

FROM these scriptures I shall attempt to prove, that there is no such proper distinction in JEHOVAH, as is supposed and pleaded for. When the ALEIM spake to *Moses*, HE said, "I am JEHOVAH." Here he uses a personal pronoun *singular*; he doth not say *we*: therefore, in point of personality, the ALEIM, as JEHOVAH, is but one person. This is the grammatical and obvious meaning of the words: had there been more divine persons, than one in ALEIM, to have pointed them out a *plural pronoun* would have been necessary. And, I humbly conceive, no *just* reason can be assigned, why he uses a *pronoun singular*; but because, in point of personality, JEHOVAH is but one. Likewise when *Elijah* said, "The ALEIM which shall answer by fire, HE is the ALEIM; and the people answered; JEHOVAH, HE is the ALEIM;" We have another proof of the same kind: a *pronoun singular* of the third person, is here made use of to shew, that in point of personality, HE (the ALEIM) is but *one*, and as much one as JEHOVAH is *one*; for the people said, "JEHOVAH HE is the ALEIM." Now, if the pronoun singular, in the last clause, proves JEHOVAH to be but *one*; by the same rule the pronoun, which is the very same as in the former clause, proves ALEIM to be but *one*: And, as in both places, it is the same personal pronoun singular, it is just, grammatical, and rational, to restrain it in each place to one person only. The same may be noted in Psalm xcv. 6, 7. and when *David* saith, Psalm xxv. 4, 5. "Shew me, JEHOVAH, thy ways, &c.

for

for *thou* art the ALEIM of my salvation," there is a pronoun of the *second person singular*, which, in my opinion, sufficiently proves, that in the ALEIM, as JEHOVAH, there is no proper personal plurality. I apprehend, also, that we are not to understand by JEHOVAH, *merely* the divine nature and essence, without a proper personality; but the divine Being himself, *personally subsisting*: and therefore he takes to himself the personal pronouns, *I, thou, and he*; and, as he never doth this in the *plural*, but always in the *singular*, it is most natural and just to say of JEHOVAH as the scripture doth, that he is but one, i. e. but one self-existent being, one infinite Spirit, one divine person, one God. And to me it seems exceedingly improper to apply *personal pronouns* to the *mere abstracted nature* and essence of Deity, or of any other intelligent being.

In the texts above mentioned we have the *noun singular*, JEHOVAH; with the *singular pronouns*, *I, THOU, HE*, connected with the *plural noun* ALEIM. Now, whether is it more just and proper to interpret the *plural noun* ALEIM, by the *singular* JEHOVAH, with its *singular pronouns*, *I, THOU, HE*, or *vice versa*? Besides, when the order is reversed, and the *plural noun* is placed and rendered first, it is then not joined with a *plural pronoun*, but with a *singular*: "ALEIM *he* is the ALEIM: ALEIM said, *I* am JEHOVAH." Now, if the *personal pronouns* are not to determine the person or persons of the noun to which they relate in construction, what can determine them, or of what use are they? If it be said the *verb*, (though that, in my opinion, is not to be admitted where the pronoun

is expressed); yet even in that case, it makes nothing against us, but for us; for it is well known that the plural ALEIM is connected with a *verb singular* also, and that most generally.

Thus, in my humble opinion, it is sufficiently proved, that ALEIM is not plural, in point of personality, when meaning the true God or pure Deity, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, which may be also expressed by the following syllogism—thus: When *pronouns* are joined, and properly constructed with any *noun*, they ought to determine the person or persons expressed by that noun:—But ALEIM is most frequently joined and constructed with the singular pronouns, *I, thou, he*: therefore, ALEIM, when meaning the true God, is designed to express, not a *plurality of divine persons*, but *one only*. If this rule of construction be not just and applicable in the present case, I should be glad to be better informed.

I SHALL now proceed to add a few other reasons in support of this important point of divinity, though I have already hinted at some of them. And first, if ALEIM be properly expressive of a plurality of persons in the divine nature, it cannot, I think, with propriety, be applied to *one* of them separately and alone; but that it is so, is evident, and that again and again, in Psalm xlv. for unto the Son he saith, “Thy throne, O ALEIM, is for ever and ever. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness, therefore ALEIM, thy ALEIM, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

As then it is used of one person only, it cannot, in my opinion, be designed to express a plurality of persons in
Deity,

Deity, but may be well understood to mean but *one divine person*, when meaning the true God in all the scriptures. For if this plural noun may be applied to *one single person* only, then *its being plural* contains no solid proof for its being expressive of a *plurality of persons*; but it is most reasonable to suppose that its plural form respects something else: for if in some places it is used, and that with divine propriety, for one person, why may it not be so used, and understood in all others, if there be nothing in the text that necessarily forbids it? Secondly, The *Hebrew* frequently expresses some things by a plural noun, though the object, thing, and person, is but one. Is not the word *peni*, or *penim*, plural, yet it often means but one face, as in Gen. xxxii. 20, 30. and xxxiii. 10. Exod. xxxiii. 11. Deut. xxxiv. 10. Judges vi. 2. ADONI and ADONIM is also plural, but it is generally rendered singular, and means but one person, a *lord*, *master*, or *ruler*, Gen. xxiv. 2, 3, 39. and xl. 7. Deut. x. 17. 1 Kings xxii. 17. "This word is often, for a *singular*, put in the *plural number*, to express dignity or honor. The *plural* ADONI, when it means the Creator, is put for an *absolute singular* §."

Now, if ADONI, which is plural, may be used for one lord, or master, by way of dignity or eminence; and when used of God is put for an absolute singular, to denote JEHOVAH's absolute supremacy and excellency, as the one Lord and Ruler of the universe, without meaning,

§ Sæpe ponitur in plurali pro singulari ad ornatum, vel honoris gratia.— De CREATORE, ADONI ponitur, pro absolute singulari. Marius's Lex. edit. à Romains.

or pointing out any personal distinctions in the Godhead ; why may not ALEIM be also used as a name of JEHOVAH, in a plural form, for the same or a similar reason, i. e. to express the *supreme* and only true object of divine worship ? From these instances it seems to me sufficiently plain, that the plural form of the noun ALEIM doth by no means necessarily declare a plurality of persons in JEHOVAH. It is, I believe, generally allowed, that when ADONI is connected with JEHOVAH, it does not indicate more persons than one ; but is JEHOVAH the ruler. And is there not as good reason to suppose, that the *plural noun* ALEIM, when connected with JEHOVAH, means but one person ; as when the plural ADONIM is connected with JEHOVAH ?

THIRDLY, When the noun ALEIM is given us in *Greek* by the apostles, it is never, when meaning the true God, rendered *Theoi*, but *Theos*. This, with me, if no other reason could be given for its meaning but one divine person, would determine the point. And may I not venture to oppose this translation, *under the sanction of divine authority*, to all the boasted knowledge of the most accurate and able critics in the *Hebrew* language ? The apostles have rendered ALEIM a *plural Hebrew* noun, by *Theos*, a *Greek singular* ; and have expressly told us, that *Theos* is but one. If, therefore, they were competent judges of the *Hebrew* tongue, and faithful to their trust ; which no christian will deny ; then, I think, it plainly follows, that ALEIM, the true God, doth not mean a *plurality* of divine persons, or intelligent spirits in the Godhead : for the apostle testifies, God is one ; therefore, in order to account for its being plural, we must not obstinately

stinately persist in maintaining, that it is designed to express a proper, natural, and essential distinction of persons in Deity ; unless we mean to oppose scripture to scripture, and contradict the plain testimony of the holy prophets and apostles, who with one mouth declare, *that* JEHOVAH, *that* God is *one*. But it may be said, Our Lord and his apostles took the old testament names of God as standards. This we admit ; though it is hardly probable that they were sufficiently known, especially among the heathen ; when, therefore, they referred to them by the *Greek* words *Kurios* and *Theos*, there must be propriety in the reference : It is, I think, manifest, that by the former, in its highest sense, they meant the divine Being as subsisting in one person ; and by the latter also they did not mean two or three persons, but one only. To suppose otherwise, would not the reference appear to be improper, and tend to lead the believing *Gentiles*, at least, to conceive of God as one, personally considered, and no more (which in the opinion of our modern opponents, is a dangerous error) ? for they well knew that *Theos* had a plural. But if, as some seem to say, the *Hebrew* noun *ALEIM* is as much plural in *sense*, as the *Greek* *Θεοι*, i. e. *gods* ; why do not those persons plainly tell us, that they mean so ; and that whenever they make use of the name, they intend nothing less by it than a plurality of persons, in the full and proper sense of the word ; that is, of *Gods* ? but, for our parts, we believe God rather than men, who, by the mouth of all his holy prophets and apostles, hath declared and testified that he is but one. And the apostles in the New Testament, who spake, not in the words which *man's wisdom teacheth*, but which the Holy Ghost

teacheth, have constantly rendered ALEIM, not Θεοι, but Θεος; *not gods, but God.*

MANY also affirm, that ALEIM is derived from the verb אלה, to bind a thing, or person, by oath (though others assert the contrary) yet this, I conceive, cannot in truth be applied to *divine persons* bound by oath; for we have no idea of persons mutually bound by oath, but what are proper *distinct* intelligent Beings: Nor do we ever read in scripture of more than *one* divine person that swears, and and he is said to swear *by himself*; *this is revealed*: but we never read of more divine persons swearing *one to another*. JEHOVAH, we are told, sware to ADONI, his Christ, and by that oath made him a priest for ever, Psalm cx. 1.

IN short, if these gentlemen mean any thing by a Trinity of divine persons, I cannot understand what they certainly mean, unless it be a Trinity of gods; but they say that they do not intend this, and I sincerely believe them; yet it seems to me their words necessarily mean so. Now the *Arian* Trinity of *unequal* gods is both irrational, unscriptural, and false (for to us there is but one God the Father); but a Trinity of *co-equal* gods is still much more so. Further, I apprehend, that the name JEHOVAH is always to be understood, not essentially only, but also personally; and that for these reasons:

1. IT is rendered in the New Testament κυριος* *lord*, that is, a being possessed of, and exercising power and dominion: but this, I suppose, cannot be understood of any but a proper

* Both the Hebrew words יהוה, JEHOVAH, and אדוני, ADONI, are most commonly rendered in Greek, κυριος, lord; yet there is an essential difference between these names; the former, indeed, includes the latter, but not vice versa. ADONI is a name of honor and dominion, therefore, in the highest sense,

proper person. All the personal acts of creation, government, &c. are also ascribed to JEHOVAH. Hence, I suppose, *that* name of God doth not *barely* mean the DIVINE NATURE, but the Godhead *personally* subsisting: If it be said that *κύριος* doth not fully express and comprehend the meaning of the name JEHOVAH; this is allowed: yet as JEHOVAH is the one supreme ruler and governor of the universe, he may well be characterized, and spoken of, by the name *κύριος*, which signifies, not *that* which rules, but *he* that rules, and hath supreme dominion.

AGAIN: The apostle *John*, who is allowed to have given us the meaning of the name JEHOVAH, by *ὁ αὐτὸς ὁ ἰσχυμένος*, doth evidently use it personally, and not barely as a name of essence. See Rev. i. 4. "from *him*, *who* is, and *who* was, and *who* is to come,—ver. 8. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, *who* is, and *who* was, and *who* is to come, the Almighty," see also chap. iv. 8. xi. 17. And again, chap. xvi. 5. "Thou art righteous, O Lord, *who* art, and wast, and shalt be."

2. THE name JEHOVAH is to be understood *personally*, because all the actions and characters belonging to a proper person are ascribed to him, such as these: JEHO-
sense, it belongs to JEHOVAH: ADONI is a name that is given to *inferior* rulers, and is eminently applied to Christ, whom JEHOVAH hath made King and Lord of all: but JEHOVAH is the incommunicable name of God, and belongs to one only, nor can it be properly given to another: none can be made JEHOVAH. If this distinction were duly attended to, it would perhaps be a means of our understanding aright many texts of scripture, which, I humbly conceive, have been wrongly interpreted and misunderstood by many. Thus where Christ is called, Psalm cx. 1. ADONI, lord; and where the apostle saith, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. xii. 3. It doth not mean that Christ is JEHOVAH, but that he is made by JEHOVAH, Lord of all; both Lord and Christ: and thus believers confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, unto the glory of God the Father, i. e. of JEHOVAH, who made him so.

VAH

VAH knows and understands, Psalm xlv. 11. and cxlviii. 5. JEHOVAH purposes and decrees, Isa. xiv. 24. Prov. viii. 29. JEHOVAH counsels and sends, Psalm xxxiii. 11. Jer. i. 7. JEHOVAH wills and commands, Psalm xl. 8. and xix. 8. And are not all these the acts of a proper person, of an intelligent being distinctly subsisting? Is it possible to apply them to the divine essence, without including a proper personality?

3. JEHOVAH *also hath a spirit*, as all proper intelligent persons or beings have; the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of JEHOVAH. "The Spirit of JEHOVAH shall rest upon him," Isa. xi. 2. "I will pour out *my* Spirit upon all flesh," Joel ii. 28.

4. JEHOVAH is a proper person, because the personal pronouns, *I*, *thou*, and *he*, are constantly applied to him, and he takes them to himself. The scripture abounds with instances of this sort, in which the personal pronouns are applied to JEHOVAH. I will only mention two or three texts: "I am JEHOVAH," Exod. xx. 2. Mal. iii. 6. "*Thou*, whose name alone is JEHOVAH," Psalm lxxxiii. 19. "That all the people of the earth may know that JEHOVAH *he* is the ALEIM, there is none else," 1 Kings viii. 60.

Now, if all these things put together do not prove that JEHOVAH is the divine essence, with a *personal propriety*, what proof can be given of the proper personality of any *being* whatever? But if JEHOVAH means not *barely* the divine essence, but the DIVINE BEING *personally* subsisting, (which, I conceive, hath been made manifest) then it certainly follows, that the Deity, the living God, is as truly and properly *one in person*, as he is *one in essence*.

C H A P. IX.

Contains an exposition of divers texts of scripture, wherein also are pointed out some mistakes relating to the person of CHRIST.

I. **I**T is affirmed by some, that CHRIST, *as the Son of God*, is a divine person begotten in the essence of Deity, by an act of eternal generation, which they ground on Psalm ii. 7. and such like scriptures; from whence they reason after this manner: First, "He that *begat*, and he that is *begotten*, must be of the *same essential nature*; therefore God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, must be of the same divine nature." Secondly, *That if there be an eternal Father, there must be an eternal Son.*" Thirdly, Because Christ is called God's *own Son*, and his *only begotten*, he must be a Son in the *unbegotten essence* of God the Father, and, as such, GOD, *equal* with the Father."

THOUGH this opinion seems to be given up by some zealous Trinitarians, as that which rather betrays than maintains the *proper Deity* of Christ (for how can a divine person be *self-existent*, and also *begotten*?) this opinion,

opinion, therefore, is in our day renounced, and even opposed, by many, that are counted *orthodox*, in the doctrine of the Trinity ; but as others do still insist upon it, and positively assert, that upon this ground *alone* the Deity and divine personality of the Son of God can be properly held and maintained ; I beg leave to return the following answers :

1. It is granted that Christ, in a strict and proper sense, is the Son of God, and that he was begotten in eternity, before the worlds were created ; but doth it therefore follow that he was begotten *in* and *of* the divine essence, or that he is, strictly speaking, *co-eternal* with the FATHER, by whom he was begotten ? I conceive not. It will, I imagine, be allowed by all parties, that the scripture is totally silent, both as to the *manner* wherein, and *substance* whereof, the *Son of God* was begotten : Consequently the above assertions are only supported by human supposition and reasoning ; and hence it is, that while one person supposes and asserts that the inference is necessary and just ; others as positively assert the contrary : and yet they are equally zealous in maintaining that the Godhead subsists in a Trinity of co-essential persons ; but I humbly conceive, that both parties are mistaken, whose common error seems to be this—that they both in different ways have followed too much the guidance of human reason, and forsaken the clear light and rule of the divine word : For, I hope, I may confidently affirm, that we know no more of the mystery of Christ's generation, either as to the *time*, or *manner*, or *nature* of it ; nor of his divine personality ; than God hath declared to us in the scrip-

scriptures; the substance of which declaration, I think, is this, viz. That Christ was begotten of God, and had an existence with God, before the world was. Thus far then we have sure footing, from the express teaching and revelation of God's word; but farther we cannot go with certainty, nor perhaps with safety. Is it not presumption to intrude into things which we have not seen, and which God hath not told us?

2. It doth not, I apprehend, *necessarily* follow, because Christ is the Son of God, that he was begotten *in or of* the divine essence; for though it be true, with regard to creatures, that a human father, and a son properly begotten by him, are both of one and the same nature: yet it doth not follow, that it is thus with respect to the Creator, and the sons of God. The case is not parallel; for *every* son of a created Father hath of necessity the same nature with himself, and, as such, is in a proper sense equal with him; yea, his offspring may be, and often is, more excellent and every way superior to him that begat him; except that he was not *coeval* with him: besides he that begat was himself also begotten: but when we speak of God as a Father, who is JEHOVAH, self-existent, and unbegotten, no person begotten of him can, in a full and proper sense, be said to be every way equal with him; for if all, or any of the sons of God, are necessarily of his *essential nature*, and in all respects equal with God, merely because they have GOD for their FATHER, would it not follow, that every son of God, begotten of him, is also God, in the full and proper sense of the word? Is not this way of reasoning nearly akin to that by which satan tempted our first parents to aspire to a proper

equality with their Maker ? for it is certain, that *Adam* was the son of God. But you will say, ' This is not true of all, but only of one, even of Christ the *first born* and only begotten of the Father.' It is granted that Christ is the Son of God in a *manner peculiar to himself*; that he is *eminently* so, above all his brethren; but if, *as a Son*, he is a divine person in the essence, and as such is properly God, what reason can be given why all the rest of the children of God, who also are his sons, and bear his image, should not likewise be generated in, and essentially partakers of, the divine essence ? To say they are his sons by *adoption*, is not a sufficient answer; for, notwithstanding this, they are in a proper sense regenerated, begotten, and born of him. The first born, indeed, hath the pre-eminence, as he is the heir, &c. but all his brethren, though born after him, and in divers respects inferior to him, by the will and appointment of the Father, are, notwithstanding this, of the very same nature with himself. And doth not the scripture plainly speak thus ? Is not Christ called " the first-born among many brethren ?" and is he not said to be " made like unto them in all things," only that he was without sin ? Doth he not himself expressly tell them, that *his* God and Father was *their* God and Father; and that the Father had loved them, as he had loved him ? and doth he ever intimate, that he was the Son of God in another nature infinitely above them ? I find no such thing in scripture. And doth not the apostle likewise testify, that the saints are heirs of God, yea joint heirs with Christ ? and that they are both of one (of one Father and one nature) and therefore Christ

was not ashamed to call them *brethren*? Do not these scriptures, then, make it plain, that Christ, as the begotten Son of God, is of the very same nature, and one with his beloved church and people, whom he redeemed and purchased with his own blood? Therefore it seems not to follow, because Christ is the Son of God, that he, as such, was begotten in the divine essence, and co-equal with God the Father.

PERHAPS it will be said, that those scriptures, which speak of Christ as the *first-born* among many brethren, &c. respect *only* his *human nature*, and not his whole person. I have said before, Where doth Christ make that distinction? And I ask again, *Where doth the scripture so much as hint, that when Christ is called the Son of God, it is not to be understood of his human nature?* but that it means *another nature*, wherein, as the Son of God, he exists in the divine essence. I observe no such thing in scripture. Therefore, as those persons whom Christ calls his brethren, are declared to be the sons of God; nor is he distinguished from them, but as the first-born, and immediately begotten of God, and in personal union with him; and as he is the appointed Mediator and Lord of God's house, that he might have the pre-eminence in all things; doth it not necessarily follow, that Christ, as the Son of God, is of the very same nature with his church and people? and consequently, in *whatever nature* they are the begotten sons of God, in the *same nature* is Christ the begotten Son of God.

3. THAT *prop'r Deity* is not essential to the person of Christ, *as the Son of God*, seems to appear from hence; viz. that the scripture ascribes weakness and sufferings

to him as such, when he tabernacled among us; "for the Son of God was made under the law, Gal. iv. 4. became obedient unto death, Phil. ii. 8. was made a curse for us, Gal. iii. 13. It further saith, That we are reconciled to God *by the death of his Son*, Rom. v. 10. that God spared not his *own Son*—but *delivered him up* for us all, Rom. viii. 32. Thus God's *own Son* learned obedience by the things which he suffered," Heb. v. 8. Are not these scriptures plain and express? and do they not testify, that the Son of God suffered and died? But is it possible for us to conceive, or can any christian believe, that Christ suffered *as a divine person*? Did that author understand what he wrote, when he said, "The Son of the living God, *equal in nature and glory with his adorable Father*, and the *essential image of his person*, humbles himself, becomes *man, sin, and a curse*?" Surely that person who was capable of suffering death, and of being made sin and a curse, could not be, in a proper sense, the living God: And, if this be all the God-head that is ascribed to Christ, certainly it must be a created one, and of the *Arian* kind; for it is not possible that *supreme Godhead*, in any personal mode whatever, could suffer and die. When we worship the TRUE GOD, we worship the LIVING GOD; him who necessarily lives, is *impassible*, and *incapable of suffering*, in any proper sense whatever: Should it be said, it was the *man Christ only* that suffered, which is the truth; then it is manifest that Christ is called the Son of God with respect to his human nature only; for it is one of the most plain and important doctrines of scripture, that the Son of God suffered for us, THE JUST FOR THE UNJUST, *that he might bring*

us to God: Now Christ did suffer as a divine person, or he did not; If he did not suffer as a divine person, which, I suppose, is most generally believed (and is an undoubted truth) then, as a Son, he is not to be considered as a divine person in the Godhead; for it is certain from the scripture, and I hope hath been already proved, that the Son of God did suffer, and bleed, and die: and happy it is for fallen man that he did so. Therefore, I conceive, that it is not true, nor can it ever be proved from scripture, that Christ, as the Son of God, is a divine person in the Godhead, co-essential and co-eternal with the Father.

4. THE argument drawn from God's being an *everlasting Father* (therefore he must have an *everlasting Son*) appears to me of no force in this matter; every thing indeed that existed before time is called eternal, and Christ was begotten before time; therefore, in this respect, God may be called an everlasting Father, and Christ an everlasting Son: but it doth not follow, that Christ, as a Son, is therefore *co-eternal* with the Father; for he might, as a Son, be begotten of the Father in some point of that eternity; and it is most probable that he was begotten immediately before God created any part of the heavens or the earth, or of men, or angels. Do not these scriptures seem to declare this? "JEHOVAH (saith he) possessed me *the beginning* of his way, before his works of old," Prov. viii. 22. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the *first born* of every creature," Col. i. 15. "The *beginning* of the creation of God," Rev. iii. 14. "And because Christ is the beginning of God's creation, and
God

God created all things by him and for him, therefore the prophet *Micah* saith, "His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." That these words are spoken of Christ, not as JEHOVAH, but as man and Mediator, God's anointed King, seems plain from the following verses, "Therefore will he give them up until the time that she who travaileth hath brought forth; then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of *Israel*," *Micah* v. 3. "He shall stand, and feed in the strength of JEHOVAH, in the majesty of the name of JEHOVAH his God, and they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth," ver. 4. and, ver. 5. "This man shall be the peace, when the *Assyrian* shall come into our land," &c. Here Christ, whom God had chosen to be ruler in *Israel*, and unto the ends of the earth, is evidently spoken of as the Son of man, and the Son of God: hence he calls those of the human race, who are begotten of God, *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, his brethren. He is said, therefore, to be great unto the ends of the earth, and to be our peace: he is likewise said to feed them, not in his own strength, but in JEHOVAH's, whom also he calls, *the Lord his God*. The person then here spoken of, as the ruler and shepherd of *Israel*, whose goings forth were from the days of eternity, cannot be meant of Christ as God, but as man; for JEHOVAH is declared to be his God; therefore this text speaks nothing of his eternal generation, as a divine person, *co-essential* and *co-equal* with the Father.

2. A PERSON may, and, according to our ideas, *must exist before he is a Father*; and from all that the scripture speaks

speaks of Christ, as the Son of God ; and of the Father's begetting of him ; God the Father is, I think, represented *as existing previous* to the generation of his Son ; but when Christ his Son was begotten, then God was a Father, and his Father, but not before. There are some, indeed, of the most zealous advocates for the eternal generation of Christ as a divine person, who do not *seem* to mean what they speak ; if otherwise, I conceive that they are not consistent with themselves ; for they tell us, that " the three persons equally subsist in the unity of the divine essence, *without any derivation, or communication of it from one to another ;*" How then can one be a SON, and another a FATHER ?" They likewise tell us, that " they are *self-existent*, and that there is not any *priority, or inferiority* of nature, or in point of existence and glory ; but I think it hardly possible to make these assertions comport with the meaning of the terms *begotten*, and *generation* ; or *with the ideas* which those terms will always convey to the human understanding : And, if they mean nothing, I think it would be our wisdom intirely to drop and discontinue the use of them.

IT seems also plain to me, that some *modern* divines, when treating of this subject, do not mean *exactly* the same as the *Nicene* fathers, and our old divines, who wrote above *a century ago*.

Is it not plain and universally received, that the God and Father of all believers in Christ existed before they were begotten by him ; and that in their whole proper persons they differ essentially in nature from him that begat them ? Now, I ask, what reason can be given, or
from

from what scripture can it be proved, that God the Father doth not in nature differ likewise from Christ his Son; and that the Father did not exist before him? For my own part, I know of none, but the contrary seems plain both from reason and revelation; seeing Christ and his church are plainly declared to be *one in nature*, and as the sons of God, they are *his brethren*, and *joint heirs* with him; and his God and Father is also their God and Father.

UPON the whole, then, if we can conceive, or are warranted from the scriptures to believe, that the *essence of the Godhead was begotten by a person in the Godhead, into another personal subsistence, co-equal and co-eternal with him that begot him* (either by necessity of nature, or by an arbitrary act of the Father's will, for they seem not to be agreed about the manner) and that this *same divine person*, said to be eternally begotten in the essence, did in the human nature *actually obey the law, and suffer and die*; then we may receive as true this doctrine, That Christ, as God, and as a divine person, was eternally begotten, became man, and was made a curse: but it is most abhorrent to the human mind to conceive of the Deity being made a curse: and it is so contrary to our natural ideas of the living God, and the character which is given of him in the sacred scriptures, that one would think it almost impossible for a reasonable being, and especially for a christian man, to admit of its possibility; and yet this *seems* to be the opinion of some in our day: which gross notion of the Deity's being passible, and capable of suffering, seems to arise from a *mistaken zeal* for the honor of Christ, as *another distinct person in the essential Godhead*. The design is,

I doubt

I doubt not, well meant; but I am persuaded, that those who affirm it, only strengthen the hands of infidels, and weaken the cause which they would seem to uphold. For such persons, instead of honoring, do, in my opinion, dishonor the Son of God, and rob him of the glory of *true Deity*.

I KNOW there are many of my brethren that differ from me in the article of the Trinity, who will agree with me in this; viz. That Christ, as the Son of God, and begotten of him, is not a proper divine person; yet they strenuously affirm, that Christ is a divine *self-existent* person in the Godhead, and that there are two other such persons besides him: *These* assert, that the names of Father, Son, and Spirit, are not names of *nature* and *relation*, but are *office characters*, or *names of office*, which they tell us, the three divine and co-equal persons in the Godhead agreed to take, and arbitrarily assumed when they entered, as is supposed, into covenant to redeem mankind; so that, according to this new plan (for new, I think, it is!) *neither of the persons in the Godhead* is really, and in a proper sense, either *Father or Son*; but he that is called the Father might possibly have been the Son, &c. Is not this SABELLIANISM? But they deny the consequence, therefore I do not charge it upon them. THESE Trinitarians, then, widely differ from those before mentioned, yet they are bold in declaring, that there are three *unbegotten*, self-existent persons in JEHOVAH. But bare assertions, however positive, are no proofs: "To the law and to the testimony," &c. Some perhaps imagine, and are ready to say, that they have already proved the point over and over, beyond all

reasonable doubt or possible reply ; but to me it appears otherwise : yea, the zealous Trinitarians, who hold the opinion of eternal generation in the divine essence, do themselves peremptorily assert and declare, that those who deny Christ to be a divine person by generation, even eternal generation, deny his proper Deity, and divine personality ; whilst, on the other hand, the *Hutchinsonian* affirms, That the doctrine of eternal generation is an absurdity ; and that a begotten God is no better than a created God. If, therefore, the *zealots* of these two parties are allowed to sit in judgment on each other, they will condemn one another, as being capitally erroneous in the article of the Trinity, and the proper Godhead of Christ : Consequently, if the truth be not found with either party, as it is not, they themselves being judges ; it seems that this grand article of the christian faith relating to the Godhead of Christ is not well understood, nor rightly believed and taught, even by those that most zealously speak and write in defence of it : and, if so, it is probable that the truth may lie between them both : and whereas both parties professedly believe the scriptures to be the only standard of sound doctrine, and frequently appeal to that sacred test for the truth of their doctrine ; therefore we will consider the principal texts which are usually cited by them on this occasion, after having obviated two or three more objections. First, it is said, That Christ is JEHOVAH. Answer, I find this no-where but in *composition*, as in Jer. xxiii. 6. which proves not, that it is to be referred to him personally, but rather proves the contrary. Again it is said, “ where Christ is called the *angel* of JEHOVAH, he

he is not to be distinguished from JEHOVAH, because the particle *of* is not in the *Hebrew* text. Thus in *Exod.* iii. 2. and in *Judges* vi. 12. it should be read the *angel* JEHOVAH; and so in many other passages:" We, on the contrary, believe that by the angel is meant one person, even Christ, and by JEHOVAH another, even God the Father: To this objection, which, in my opinion, contains a corrupt gloss on the sacred word, I return the following answers:

1. IT is well known, that *nouns* in *Hebrew* are not declined by *cases*, or different *terminations*, expressing the signs of, *to*, &c. as in *Greek* and *Latin*, but are often expressed by letters prefixed, and are sometimes understood, especially the sign of the Genitive, which is easily supplied from the obvious sense and scope of the passage.

2. OF, the sign of the Genitive case, is always expressed in the *Greek* translation, as it also is, and that with great propriety, in the *English* version.

3. IF *this* rule be observed in the reading of other passages, where the sign *of* is not expressed in the original, it would make them speak nonsense: take an instance or two out of many that I could mention: "The ark of JEHOVAH your GOD," *Joshua* iv. 5. "Moses, the man of God." *Deut.* xxxiii. 1. and chap. xxxiv. 5. "Moses, the servant of JEHOVAH." Now, if we leave out the sign *of* (for it is not in the original) would it not be absurd, and even blasphemous, to say, that the ark was JEHOVAH, and that Moses the servant was JEHOVAH?

4. WE have the sense of this *Hebrew* idiom explained to us by an infallible interpreter, in *Acts* vii. 30. "There

appeared to him (*Moses*) in the wilderness of Sinai, ἀγγέλος Κυρίου, *an angel of the Lord.*" Also in John i. 52. "Ye shall see heaven opened and the *angels* τοῦ Θεοῦ, OF GOD, ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Compare these texts with Exod. iii. 2, and Gen. xxviii. 12. Therefore the particle *of* is understood, and must be supplied, in those and such like texts, though in the *Hebrew* it be not expressed; and whoever, in rendering such texts, omits the particle, that is to say, translates them, not the *angel* OF JEHOVAH, but the *angel* JEHOVAH, misrepresents the word of GOD, and doth not give us the true sense and meaning of it.

AGAIN, 2. It is objected, that when Christ is called πρῶτότοκος, *the first born*, Col. i. 15. the accent is misplaced, and that it should have been πρῶτοτόκος, *the first bringer forth, or former of every creature.* This alone, it is said, will make the sense of the words clear and plain. But it appears to me otherwise; and that it would rather obscure than explain the passage: for the scripture often and expressly declares, that God the Father created all things by his Son Jesus Christ; therefore the *Father* is properly the *chief* and *first* former of all things, else he could not be said to create them by *Christ*, as in Eph. iii. 9. Heb. i. 2. It is allowed, that God the Father made nothing *without* his Son Jesus Christ: but if we distinguish between the Father and the Son, then I say, as the scripture testifies, that God the Father is the *first*, and *greater*, and the *head* of Christ, his Son. 2. The scope of the whole passage plainly shews, that the person here spoken of is not to be understood of a self-existent person in the Godhead; for
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he is declared to be, the IMAGE of the *invisible God*: and therefore he is distinguished from God—for the *image* of the *invisible God* cannot itself be the *invisible God*. 3. Christ the only begotten Son is here represented as *receiving* all creating power from God the Father, not in a state of separation, but in union with himself, by giving to him of his own Spirit, the Spirit of life and power, whereby he quickeneth all things; so that it is still the Father's act in and by his Son: And thus I understand the apostle when he declares, "that it *pleased* the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," ver. 19. The next verse shews him also to be the same person, *by whom* God the Father *reconciled* all things unto himself, ver. 20, and this we know was *by the man Christ Jesus* who died and rose again: consequently it is fit, proper, and reasonable, to understand those words, *the first born of every creature*, to be spoken of Christ properly, not as God, but as man and mediator, God's only begotten Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things.

5. THE same word is used by the apostle when speaking of Christ; he calls him, ver. 18. *πρωτότοκος*, the first-born from the dead. If the word be understood properly here, as it certainly must, there is just the same reason for understanding it thus, in ver. 15. And then the apostle's reasoning is just and proper, viz. "Christ is the *first-born of all creatures*, and the *first-born from the dead*; that in *all things* he might have the PRE EMINENCE:" for being the first begotten of all things, he was chief in the first creation; and being first-begotten from the dead, he is chief and first-born in the new creation also; hence he is called

called in another scripture, *πρωτότοκος*, the *first-born* among many brethren, Rom. viii. 2. And, as God, having begotten him from the dead, did make him a quickening Spirit of others, and doth actually quicken and raise the dead by him; so likewise as the first-born of every creature, God the Father made him a head of life and influence to all creation; and thus it pleased the Father that in his Son, even the man Christ Jesus, should all fulness dwell. Therefore, I conceive, that neither the criticism on the word *πρωτότοκος*, nor the objection raised from it, is either just, or true. Neither are the words to be understood as spoken of Christ *proleptically*, i. e. as if he was not then begotten, but existed only in the divine *decree* and *purpose*; or as *Levi* is said to be in the loins of *Abraham*, when *Melchisedec* met him; for Christ is not here spoken of as a hidden *embryo* lying in another being (as the apostle speaks of *Levi* in *Abraham*) but as *really born*, *actually begotten*, and *existing*: and not only so, but as a *living agent*, a *co-worker* with God the Father; for the scripture saith, plainly and properly, that *God created* all things *by* him; but this could not be true if he did not then *actually exist*. Of the same kind, is the objection raised from Rev. xiii. 8. but those words, *from the foundation of the world*, are, I conceive, not to be referred to the Lamb slain; but to the names written in the book of life: and thus understood, it well agrees with the words of another apostle, who saith, “Ye were redeemed with the blood of Christ, as of a *Lamb slain*, without blemish, and without spot; who verily was *fore-ordained* before the foundation of the world, but was *manifested* in these last times for you, who *by* him do believe

believe in God, who raised him from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God," 1 Pet. i. 19—21.

WE shall now proceed to consider those scriptures that are commonly brought to prove the *distinct* Deity of Christ. The first text which I shall mention, is that in Exod. xxiii. 20—23. "Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way," &c. It is plain that JEHOVAH's name was in this angel, i. e. I conceive JEHOVAH himself, his GODHEAD and authority, was in him: and this is quite agreeable to other scriptures, which expressly declare, that the Father was *in* his Son Jesus: but at the same time it is quite plain, that the *angel sent* is *personally distinguished* (though not separated) from JEHOVAH that sent him; and consequently the angel is distinguished *from* the *name* of JEHOVAH also that was in him: It seems plain also, that the *angel* was *inferior* to JEHOVAH that sent him, whose name was in him. Therefore the text only proves the existence of the man Christ, as a pure spirit, and that he was God's angel, the messenger of the covenant, before he took flesh; and also that he did nothing of himself, but as the Father had appointed, and given him commandment; and at the same time that he was never alone without the Father, who was always in him, and with him; by whose power and authority Christ always acted: and hence his works are the works of God. So that the words prove not an equality of divine persons in the Godhead; but rather, that there is but one person in JEHOVAH, who is united to, dwells in, and acts by Christ, as his angel and servant. This is the only begotten

begotten Son of God, who, as such, is another person, and inferior to the Father.

THE next scripture which I shall mention, is in Psalm cx. 1. The "LORD, i. e. JEHOVAH, said unto my, Lord ADONI, that is Christ," &c. I cannot see how this with propriety, can be brought to prove the doctrine of a plurality of co-essential and co-equal persons in the Godhead; for it is certain, that the word ADONI doth not signify JEHOVAH, nor point out any thing of the divine essence, or of his equality with JEHOVAH; for it properly means a lord or ruler: he is said also to sit on the right hand of JEHOVAH, and JEHOVAH is said to make his enemies his footstool. Now, *can this be understood as spoken to a person who is himself, in a proper sense, JEHOVAH?* Besides, on this supposition it would prove, not that he was a person in JEHOVAH; but that he was *another* JEHOVAH: but take the words in connexion with other scriptures, and the sense of them is easy and natural. CHRIST is called *God's anointed*; who is said also to have set and established him upon his throne, as king in Zion: This is that person who came down from heaven, to take flesh, and die for man; who was again after his death and resurrection received up into heaven, and *sat on the right hand of God*: Thus *the Son of man is ascended up where he was before*. Peter also plainly shews, that this is spoken of Christ, not as JEHOVAH, but as one whom JEHOVAH hath made ruler and lord of all. Jesus, saith he, is exalted by the right hand of God, and hath received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost; for *David* is not ascended into the heavens; but he saith himself, "The
LORD

LORD said unto *my lord*, Sit thou on my right hand until I make thy foes thy footstool: therefore, let all the house of *Israel* know assuredly, that *God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*; and to me it is manifest, that this is not meant, nor can with truth be expounded, of a divine person in the God-head; but it is spoken of the man Christ Jesus, God's only begotten Son, the Mediator and head of the church, who, *as such*, is the *Prince of life*, and *Lord of glory*. Can DEITY suffer? or can JEHOVAH himself, be MADE *Lord* and *Christ*? Certainly not: Therefore, the words are spoken of *him*, "who once was crucified through weakness, but now liveth by the power of God."

ANOTHER passage is in *Isaiah vi. 1, 5, 8.* compared with *John xii. 41.* "I saw also the Lord, ADONI, sitting upon a throne, &c. Mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD, JEHOVAH of hosts. Also, I heard the voice of the Lord, ADONI, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*?" "These things said *Esaias* when he saw his (Christ's) glory, and spake of him."

The apostle, we see, mentions only one person, even Christ; but it is plain that the prophet speaks of two, one of whom he calls JEHOVAH, ver. 5. and the other ADONI, ver. i. 8. (as in *Psalms cx. 1.*) who also was the speaker, saying to JEHOVAH his Father, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for *us*?" It was the Son, then, that *Esaias* saw, for no man hath at any time seen God the Father: But, as Christ is the image of God, who also himself dwelleth in him; therefore the prophet said, "I have seen the King, the LORD of hosts:" for he that seeth the

Son, who is the image of the invisible God, doth see the Father also : not indeed in his divine shape, or person, but as his glorious perfections and Deity are displayed and made visible in the person of Christ. This text, then, says nothing of Christ, as a person in JEHOVAH, or as JEHOVAH ; for he is plainly distinguished from JEHOVAH, though, by union, he is one with him : wherefore the Godhead, or Deity of Christ, is *God the Father himself*, dwelling personally and essentially in him, and *this is the true God*. These texts, compared with Acts xxviii. 25—27. are usually brought to prove a Trinity of divine persons ; but they only prove what the scripture every where declares, that God and his Christ spake of old in the prophets, by the Holy Spirit : for the passage, as *Paul* cites it, doth not respect the words, as *spoken by the Lord himself to the prophet Isaiah* ; but the same words, as *spoken afterwards by the prophet unto the people ; which he did as moved, and influenced by the Holy Ghost*, for God gives his Spirit to Christ, and Christ to his servants for that purpose.

ANOTHER text is in Isaiah viii. 13, 14. compared with Rom. ix. 33. and 1 Pet. ii. 9. “ Sanctify the LORD of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread, and *he* shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence, &c.” These are the prophet’s words : but the apostles seem to comprehend also Isa. xxviii. 16. for *Paul* saith, “ It is written, Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offence, and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” *Peter* also says, it is contained in the scriptures,

“ Behold,

“ Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious : but a stone of stumbling, and rock of offence to them which stumble at the word,” &c.

Thus it is plain, that the apostles considered both the above-mentioned prophecies together : and it is further manifest, that here are *two* persons spoken of, the *one* laying a foundation, Behold, I lay, &c. and *another* laid as the foundation, called a *stone*, a *tried stone*, &c. therefore the prophet must be so understood, and then the words will appear not to be the prophet's own, but to be the words of God the Father, who, by the mouth of his prophet, saith, “ Sanctify the LORD of hosts,” &c. that is, by trusting in him, and waiting for him : and then, in ver. 19. he gives a promise of Christ; “ and *he*, that is Christ (called *Immanuel*, ver. 8.) even he, shall be for a sanctuary, and for a stone of stumbling ;” so that here are the same two persons spoken of as in chap. vi. And thus the prophet and the apostles are easily reconciled, and plainly speak and testify the same thing : if we interpret the words otherwise, they seem to disagree. Or if we refer the relative *he*, in ver. 19. to the antecedent JEHOVAH, ver. 18. it amounts to just the same ; for JEHOVAH is not a sanctuary to *his* people out of Christ, but *in* Christ : but the former exposition I prefer, as most agreeable to the apostle's explanation of the prophet, and because it was at Christ *as crucified*, that the *Jews* stumbled, 1 Cor. i. 24. but when they rejected Christ, they rejected God in him. Thus I think it is plain, both from the words of the prophet and of the apostles, that God the Father is here speaking of, and concerning his Son Jesus

Christ. Neither then do these texts prove Christ to be JEHOVAH as a divine person *in distinction* from the Father, and if not *distinct* in the Godhead, the controversy is at an end : and so far we are of the same mind with our offended brethren ; for we believe that JEHOVAH, God the Father, was in Christ, and that the Father and the Son, by the most perfect and glorious union, are *one*, inseparably united and undivided. Therefore, whenever the Father speaks, he speaks *in* the Son ; and whenever the Son speaks, the Father speaks *by* him. Again in Isa. xlv. 21, 22, 23. JEHOVAH saith, “ There is no God besides me, a just God and a Saviour, there is none else : Look unto me, and be ye saved, &c. I have sworn by myself—that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.” Compare this text with Rom. xiv. 10, 11. “ We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ ; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God :” and with Phil. ii. 9, 10, 11. “ God also hath highly exalted him (Christ) and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord unto the glory of God the Father.” Here again it is plain, that *two* persons are spoken of ; *one* is the *subject of exaltation, in a proper sense* ; the *other not* ; and *one* is *exalted by the other* : and to bow to him that is exalted, *as exalted by the Father*, is to bow to him that hath exalted him ; but the name which he hath given him cannot be the name JEHOVAH. Likewise the submission and worship paid to Christ, on account of the exalted name

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given to him, redounds ultimately to the glory of another, even of God the Father, who exalted him. Therefore when he saith, in the prophet, "I am God, and there is none else. Look unto me, and be ye saved," &c. they are the words of God the Father speaking in his Son, whom he hath appointed Lord of all; and in whom God was saving sinners, and reconciling the world unto himself: so that these words speak nothing of Christ personally as JEHOVAH, or as a person in the Godhead, *distinct* from the Father. Moreover so to understand them as spoken of Christ, in distinction from God the Father, is to exclude and deny the Father to be JEHOVAH the living God; for he that speaks in the prophet saith, "I am God, and there is none else." Therefore the Father is the speaker, or he is denied to be JEHOVAH. To allow the former, determines the point in our favor—to assert the latter, is horrid blasphemy. See Heb. i. 1.

ANOTHER text is that in Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. "Behold, the days come, saith JEHOVAH, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper. And this is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH *our righteousness*." It is plain that here also are two persons spoken of; the speaker is JEHOVAH, the person spoken of is his King, the Messiah: but he cannot be called JEHOVAH *our righteousness*, as a divine person, or as another JEHOVAH in *distinction* from the divine speaker; because there is but one JEHOVAH: but for this reason rather, because of his personal union with JEHOVAH; and because when he took flesh, and wrought out a righteousness for us in the earth; JEHOVAH was
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in him; for he saith himself, "The Father who sent me, is with me;" and for these reasons the *righteous branch*, the *exalted Messiah*, and King in Zion, is properly called JEHOVAH *our righteousness*: and as Joshua was his type, it seems on this very account that an *abbreviation* of the name JEHOVAH was added to his name. See Numb. xiii. 16. signifying that the man Christ, the *true Joshua* and *Saviour* of the world, was, in a most peculiar and proper sense, in union with JEHOVAH; and that God, *in and with Christ*, would save mankind. But if, as some suppose, the city of God, i. e. the church, is called JEHOVAH, SHAMMAH, Ezek. xlvi. 35. as we before observed; and Jer. xxxiii. 16. the church is called JEHOVAH *our righteousness* (though I do not think this last text is well translated) this cannot be understood properly and personally of the church; but because JEHOVAH, in Christ, dwelleth in them, and is by union one with them, as he himself saith, "I *in them*, and *thou in me*." How much more then may Christ be called JEHOVAH *our righteousness*, *because of his union with the Father*? and it is certain that Christ is made of God righteousness unto his people, who are said to be the righteousness of God *in him*. Therefore supreme Godhead is ascribed to Christ, and the name JEHOVAH is given to him, as in union, and one with the Father; but here is no mention made of his being another distinct person from the Father, in the Godhead; and therefore he may not, as such, be called JEHOVAH. As in this text he is called a righteous Branch: in another parallel scripture God calls him his servant, "Be hold, I bring forth *my servant*, the
Branch.

Branch. And I, saith JEHOVAH, will remove the iniquity of that land in one day," Zech. iii. 8, 9. Now this plainly refers to Christ's atonement for sin, which he, as God's servant, was to make, when he should come into the world, and lay down his life for us; for which cause also Christ is called *our righteousness*. Of the same person, he saith again, "Behold the *man* whose name is the *Branch*, and he shall grow up out of his place, or from under him (i. e. from under JEHOVAH) even *he* shall build the temple of JEHOVAH; yea, *he* shall build the temple of JEHOVAH, and *he* shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both," Zech. vi. 12, 13. How plain is it then that this person, whom JEHOVAH calls a *righteous BRANCH*, *my servant* the *BRANCH*, and the *man* whose name is the *BRANCH*, is fully distinguished in his whole person from JEHOVAH, that is, from God the Father? And is it not also manifest, that the counsel of peace, respecting the reconciliation of fallen man, was between God the Father and his only begotten Son, the man Christ Jesus, who according to the will of God suffered for us, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God?

AGAIN, in Zech. xii. 10. he saith, "I will pour upon the house of *David*, &c. the Spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon *me* (the apostle, citing the passage, saith *him*) whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for *him*." The apostle then interprets the former clause, as well as the latter, of *another person in distinction from him that speaketh*; for the apostle saith, "Not *me*, but
him

him whom they have pierced." And it is plain also from the prophet, that it is not to be understood *properly* of JEHOVAH, who speaks, but of his holy child Jesus (who alone was capable of suffering); for he saith, "They shall mourn for *him*;" yet as the Father and Son are by union one; and as they that hated Christ, hated his Father also; therefore, in a qualified sense, but *not properly*, they that pierced Christ, may be said to pierce his Father also. Thus to pierce God's own Son was, as it were, to pierce God himself: yet, strictly and properly, it was Christ, the anointed Son of God alone, that was pierced and suffered.

THIS manner of speaking concerning JEHOVAH and his Christ, is common with the prophets; because the Father and his Son, though two *distinct persons*, are by union one: and because there is but *one* God dwelling in *one Christ*, as his living temple; in and by whom God always spake, and acted in all his works, both of providence and grace: but though they are often spoken of as one; yet there is generally something in the context that plainly declares, they are two; and that, not as two equal persons in the Godhead, but as *two proper distinct beings*, one as begotten, a Son and Mediator; the other *unbegotten*, even the Father; one JEHOVAH, and the other *his Christ*; the anointed Saviour of the world: and consequently, *one* as *greater than the other*; even as our Lord himself hath taught us both to believe, and speak, John xiv. 28.

AGAIN, JEHOVAH, speaking by the prophet Malachi, chap. iii. i. saith, "Behold, I will send *my messenger*, and *he* shall prepare the way before *me*: and the Lord, ADONI,
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(not JEHOVAH) whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the *messenger of the covenant*, whom ye delight in, behold, *he* shall come, saith JEHOVAH of hosts." The apostle hath it thus, "Behold, I send my messenger before *thy* face, which shall prepare the way before *thee*." Thus Christ is here spoken of as the messenger of the covenant, before whom God the Father promised to send *John the Baptist* to prepare his (Christ's) way; but as he was one with the Father, who sent him, and who by his infinite Deity continued to dwell in him, therefore JEHOVAH saith, "He shall prepare the way before *me*;" for when Christ came, GOD the FATHER came in him to his temple. Had JEHOVAH come without the Mediator, he would have been a consuming fire to all flesh; and therefore he saith of Christ, "The Lord whom ye seek, and *whom ye delight in*:" and had Christ the Mediator come alone without JEHOVAH his Father, and without being sent by him; he must have been discouraged, nor could he have set judgment in the earth. Thus GOD was in CHRIST *reconciling us to himself*.

THE consideration, therefore, of this proper distinction between the Father and the Son, and at the same time of their union as of two proper persons united, will help us to explain all those passages, which some have thought were spoken of distinct divine persons in the Godhead: for whenever Christ is spoken of as JEHOVAH, he is never, as such, said to be a person *distinct* from another, called JEHOVAH; but his union with the Father, who is personally the one JEHOVAH, and dwelleth in his Son, is the plain reason why the name JEHOVAH is at all given

to the Son : moreover, when he bears that name, he is also pointed out in his distinct person by some other name or character, as an angel, his servant, or our righteousness, &c. So when the angel of JEHOVAH appeared to *Moses* in the bush, and said, "I am the God of thy fathers," &c. it is certain, that the angel was Christ, and that God the Father was in him, and spake these words by him. *Stephen*, Acts vii. makes it manifest beyond all contradiction, for ver. 30. he saith, "There appeared to him (*Moses*) an angel of the LORD;" and ver. 31. "The voice of the LORD (JEHOVAH) who was with, and in the angel, came to him, saying, I am the God of thy fathers, the God of *Abraham*," &c. ver. 34. "I have seen the affliction of my people which is in *Egypt*, and I am come down to deliver them. Now come, I will send thee into *Egypt*." ver. 35. "This *Moses* did God send to be a ruler and a deliver, by the hands of the angel that appeared to him in the bush." Thus the angel Christ was the person that visibly appeared to *Moses*; but it was God the Father, in and by him, that sent *Moses* to bring the people out of *Egypt*; for God the Father doth all things in and by his Son Jesus Christ, and is personally that one JEHOVAH, who dwelt, and dwells in Christ, in all the fulness of the Godhead.

AGAIN, John v. 18. is brought to prove Christ's equality with the Father as a distinct and co-essential person in the Godhead. Here, the Jews, when Christ called God his Father, saying, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," supposed, and said, that he made himself equal with God: but that he did not so, in a full and proper sense, seems to me plain from our Lord's answer; for Jesus said unto

unto them, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for (yet*) what things soever he doth, these also doth the Son likewise: for the Father loveth the Son, and *sheweth* him all things that himself doth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will; for the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father that hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself; and hath *given him authority* to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. I can of *my ownself* do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not *mine own will*, but *the will of the Father*, which hath sent me."

On which words we make the following observations: *First*, It is allowed that Christ saith, "He doth the works which the Father doth." *Secondly*, That he hath life in himself. *Thirdly*, That he raiseth up the dead. *And, Lastly*, That all men should honor the Son, as they honor the Father. On the *other hand*, he declares, *First*, That the Father *sheweth* him all things. *Secondly*,

* So the particle γαρ is rendered, Rom. v. 7.

That the Father hath *given* him to have life in himself. *Thirdly*, That all judgment is *committed* to him by the Father. *Fourthly*, That to honor him as the Father, seems evidently to mean to honor him, as *sent by the Father*, to act in his name, and by his authority. See ver 23. and chap. xvii. 8. “They have *believed* that *thou didst send me.*” *Fifthly*, He begins this discourse, ver. 19. with a most solemn declaration, that *the Son can of himself do nothing*; and ends it, ver. 30. with asserting the very same thing, saying, *I can of my own self do nothing.* And, *Sixthly*, he declares, That his judgment is just, *because he seeks not his own will*, but the *will of the Father who sent him.* Now, if any impartial person duly considers this scripture, and compares these things together, I think it must evidently appear from thence, that Christ doth not here speak of himself, as a person in the Godhead, co-equal with the Father; for he plainly declares his dependence on the Father, that he acted by his authority, was appointed by him to judge the world; that he received his power to quicken the dead from the Father; who, as other scriptures declare, “hath given him his Spirit, which is the Spirit of life that quickeneth all things;” and that *because he is the Son of man*, the Father gave him authority also to execute judgment, and hath made Christ, the second *Adam*, a quickening Spirit.

NOTHING then, I think, can be plainer, even from this very scripture, than that all the authority which Christ, as Son, is possessed of, for judgment, and the power which he hath for raising and quickening the dead, he received from the Father. Thus all things are delivered to the Son by
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the Father, and therefore the Father alone, in his own person, is the one JEHOVAH.

To say that Christ, as a divine person, and as the living God, could of himself do nothing, is so manifestly absurd, and even blasphemous, that it deserves no answer; but to be rejected with the utmost abhorrence. He that will affirm this, may be supposed capable, from the influence of prejudice, &c. to say almost any thing.

AGAIN, Phil. ii. 6. Christ is said, "to exist in the *form of God*, and that he thought it not robbery to be equal with God." The *form of God* means, I conceive, not the pure Deity, or the divine essence in a personal mode of subsisting; but it means the same as in those parallel scriptures, where the apostle saith, "CHRIST is the *image of the INVISIBLE GOD, the brightness of his glory*," &c. so that the *Godhead is made visible in an image of himself*: but the *image of God* cannot, I think, be the same, either in person, or nature, with him whose image he is: nor can we rationally suppose the image to be the very same, and every way equal with the original. We believe, that before Christ took flesh, he existed as a most glorious Spirit, and was seen in heaven *in the form of God*, and, as such, he appeared to his saints on earth, he being the brightest and completest image of God, in whom the Godhead dwells, and is made visible both to men and angels. In Christ, God hath, as it were, copied out all the glorious perfections of his Godhead: and when this same person, his only begotten Son, assumed flesh, he *then* appeared in the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, having God the Father still dwelling in him.

him; though for a time he with-held the rays of his divine majesty, yet the disciples on the mount had a glimpse of it. But it will be said, *he counted it not robbery to be equal with God.* This expression, I humbly conceive, can only mean, that *in outward appearance and glory* he was equal to the indwelling God, could the divine majesty be seen in his own pure Godhead; and, therefore, to see the Son, who is the image of God, as existing in the form of God, is to see God the Father also.

BUT that it cannot be understood of a *proper equality* of one person in the Godhead with another, or of JEHOVAH himself, in his pure Deity, is, I think, plain from the scope of the whole passage; for the person, said to be in the form of God, is called Jesus Christ, i. e. the *anointed Saviour*, who also laid aside his glory, and humbled himself, took flesh, and suffered death; and as such, likewise, he is proposed to us, for a pattern of humility, and patience in suffering. But can this be understood of a *self-existent person* in the Godhead? Certainly not. Again, *Secondly*, he is plainly *distinguished from the living invisible God*, in whose form he was: and there are not *two Gods*, but one only. *Thirdly*, He is not spoken of as a person *in* the Godhead, but he is set forth as *distinct from God*. *Fourthly*, He that is said to be in the form of God, is said also to *suffer*, &c. in a way of obedience, and to the glory of God the Father. *Fifthly*, He may be said to be equal with God, as being a full, perfect, express image, and resemblance of him: but we cannot understand his being *equal* with God, in a full and proper sense, as to Christ's deity, without making

making a plurality of gods : for if *he*, in whose form he was, is *the living God*, the supreme, as will be allowed by all ; then *another*, who in his own proper person, is *every way equal to him*, must of necessity make *two supreme deities* ; for to suppose that there are *two equals*, where *one* is absolutely the supreme, is certainly to make *two supremes* : for, in this case, what difference is there between two supremes, and two equals ?

FROM these considerations it appears to me, that it means no more than, that Christ, the only begotten Son, existed with the Father before his incarnation, as the most glorious, perfect, and visible image of God the Father ; the Father dwelling in him, and he in the Father : and hence, as the image of God, and the brightness of his glory, he is said to be equal with God : in whose glory he will appear at the last day, to judge the world, besides his own personal glory, and that because the Father is ever in, and with him.

ALSO Zech xiii. 7. is often cited on this occasion, where Christ, the shepherd of JEHOVAH, who laid down his life for the sheep, is called God's fellow ; but the *Hebrew* word doth not mean a proper equal, but a neighbour and associate, or one nearly allied and in union with another : it means the man Christ in union with JEHOVAH. This appears to be the sense of the *Hebrew* word : * " A neighbour, a member of the same society : it is applied to the human nature associated with the divine, in the person of Christ *."

" THE word *Omiti*, which we render *my fellow*, does never signify any sort of equality, but conjunction, nearness,

* Parkhurst's lex.

or neighbourhood : it is often rendered neighbour in the scriptures ; it denotes the man that was with God, or near to God, by the intimate union of the human soul to the Godhead, and was the shepherd of the flock of God, or the keeper of *Israel* in all former ages. So the vulgar *Latin* renders it, *coherentem mihi*, cleaving to me : and because of the union between the divine and human nature, it may be very properly expressed, my neighbour*." Besides, JEHOVAH, who is here the speaker, calls for the sword of justice to awake and pierce him. Surely this cannot be meant of a proper divine person in Deity : God also calls him *his* shepherd, and he plainly declares him to be *a man*, and, *as such*, speaks of him as *his fellow*, he that was next to him : nor can it be otherwise understood for the reasons above mentioned : but the man Christ was associated and taken into the nearest alliance with JEHOVAH ; that being thus united, and one with God, he might be, as it were, a partner with him of his throne, and kingdom, and glory. Thus Christ was *God's shepherd*, *his chosen* servant, God's anointed one, *his Christ*, of whom the man *David* was a *type* ; and therefore Christ is called by that name : "I will set up, saith JEHOVAH, *one shepherd* over them, and *he* shall feed them, and *he* shall be *their shepherd*, And I, JEHOVAH, will be *their God*, and *my servant David* a prince among them, I JEHOVAH have spoken it," Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.* But if Christ, as man, in his own proper human person, was not the shepherd of God's flock, with what propriety could

* Dr. Watts on the Early Existence of Christ's human Soul, page 205.

he be called *David*, or how could the *man David* be a proper type of him? And how else could the Shepherd lay down his life for the sheep? Nevertheless, JEHOVAH, God the Father, is also their shepherd, because HE is in Christ, and by personal union is one with him, and feeds, and rules us by him.

Now, these scriptures were literally fulfilled, when that *holy one of God*, Jesus Christ, was apprehended by the Jews, and died upon the cross: and when God the Father had exalted him with his own right hand, to be a prince and a saviour.

ANOTHER scripture is John i. 1. "In the beginning was the WORD, and the WORD was with GOD, and the WORD was GOD." Here it is plain, that Christ the WORD is called GOD: but it is as plain, that he is distinguished from GOD; and the apostle is exceeding careful to point out and preserve that distinction; for he adds again, "The same was in the beginning with GOD:" from which, I think, it is manifest, that he did not mean to speak of Christ, as the living God, in distinction from God the Father, with whom he was; nor ought we so to understand him: for two gods, two supremes, there cannot be: and there is not the least intimation of his being a divine person in the one God, with whom he was; therefore it is necessary that we seek for some other reason why he is here called God; seeing he is declared to be with GOD, and there is but one living and true God.

I HUMBLY conceive, then, that it must refer, either, first, to his most intimate union with the one living and true God, with whom he was; and therefore he is called

God; or rather, *secondly*, as he seems to speak of him in his own distinct person, the apostle means that the only begotten Son of God was the most perfect *image* and *representative* of God; and is therefore called God. And thus *he bears the name of him whom he represents*, and hence he is called God. Besides, in all the other parallel scriptures he is called the *image* of God, Col. i. 5. and the *SON* of God, the *brightness* of his glory, and the *express image* of his person, Heb. i. 2, 3. in which passages he is evidently spoken of as pre-existing with the Father, who is said to create all things by him: therefore these scriptures seem to mean exactly the same, and do well explain each other. There appears also, in my humble opinion, two very sufficient reasons, why he is called God; though distinguished from the Father, the only *true* God. The *first* is this: Because in scripture, that person or thing which is the image or visible type of another, is frequently called by the name of its antitype, or that which it represents. Thus the *tabernacle* and *temple* of old were called *God's temple*, because they were figures of the *true* tabernacle and temple; that is, of *Christ's body*; wherein the Godhead substantially and *properly dwells*. So, I conceive, *Jacob* was called *Israel*, because he was a type of Christ; who properly is *the man* that as a prince wrestled both with God and man, and hath prevailed. Hence of Christ he saith, "Thou art my servant, O *Israel*, in whom I will be glorified:" Isa. xlix. 3. I conceive *David* also was so named, because he typified Christ, *the man after God's own heart*: for the same reason the *rock* that was smitten in *Horeb*, is called *Christ*, because it was a type of him, as *stricken* and *smitten* of God: Christ likewise calls the *bread* and *wine* at his
last

last supper, *his body and blood*; because they were the instituted *symbols*, or *visible signs* of it. Now, as Christ is the *visible image* and *representative* of God, *chosen* also and *sent* by him to act in the name, and with the authority, of the living God, his Father; therefore Christ is called God, and that in a much more proper and exalted sense than any of the former could bear the name of that which they represented. Secondly, The *Jewish* rulers and magistrates who represented God, and acted in his name, and by his authority, are called gods: and if but one, he was called God, as *Moses* is again and again; and for the same reason, the holy angels also are called gods, because they are JEHOVAH's messengers, and act by his divine authority and power.

Now, as Christ was eminently the *angel of God*, and the *angel of his presence*, in whom he immediately dwells, whose name is in him: and as he was God's anointed prophet, priest, and king in Zion, by whom he created, redeemed, governs, and saves his people; and is also appointed of God to be the judge of quick and dead: for these reasons, I say, Christ is, and ought to be, called God, in a more full and proper sense than any other angel, or any other man whatever: and it is, I think, manifest, that in this sense Christ applies it to himself, John x. 33, 37. where we find that the *Jews* charged him with blasphemy, because they said, that *he*, being a man, made himself God: To whom he answered, "It is written in your law, I said, Ye are gods." "Now, if *he* called them gods, to whom the word of God came, and the scriptures cannot be broken (for, whatever carnal reason may say,

scriptural expressions are just and proper) Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, *Thou blasphemest*, because I said, *I am the Son of God?*" Seeing, then, the antient Jewish rulers were called gods and children of the Most High; it was much more just and proper, that the man Christ Jesus, who is eminently the Son of God, separated to the high office of a Saviour, and, *as such*, anointed of God, and sent into the world; and appointed also of the Father, to rule and judge his church; it is, I say, much more fit and proper that Christ should be called God: in this place also the Jews did not say, that he made himself equal with God; but that he, being a man, made himself God. They seem to have understood him, not as comparing himself with the Father, as a co-equal person, when he said, "I and the Father are one:" but the Jews not understanding it of union, by the Father's dwelling in him and he in the Father, as Christ afterwards explains it, seemed to suppose that he made himself to be the Father; which mistake of theirs Christ afterwards rectifies, and, at the same time, from that scripture which he cites out of Psalm lxxxii. vindicates the propriety of his being called God, considered as the Son of God, and as sent by him into the world: and thus he clears himself from the charge of blasphemy, proving his right to be so called, above all others.

MEN should be careful, therefore, that they do not call that blasphemy which the scripture allows and warrants, lest the charge fall upon themselves for speaking evil of God and his word.

AGAIN;

AGAIN: Is not Rom. ix. 5. a plain proof of Christ's distinct Deity? for he there saith, "That Christ is over all, God blessed for ever, Amen." These words, I conceive, may be understood in the same sense as the above text already explained: for Christ is called God, as he is the image and representative of God; and he is *over all*, being appointed head over all things to the church; and likewise of all principality and power; and made Lord of all: but then it is manifest, that *he is excepted*, who made him both Lord and Christ. And he is also *blessed*, yea *most blessed for ever*; for the scripture testifies, that God the Father hath blessed him for ever, Psalm xxi. 6. and xlv. 2. To which we add that confirming word *Amen*, Rev. v. 12, 13, 14. But if this interpretation be not admitted (which yet may be the apostle's meaning, and is certainly agreeable to other scriptures which thus speak of Christ) then it must be understood, as *including the Father*, who by union is one with him: for if it be otherwise understood as spoken *personally* of Christ, and taken in an *absolute sense*, without including the Father, it will prove *two supreme gods*, which both reason and scripture reject as *impossible* and *impious*. He that is God *over all*, strictly taken, hath certainly none *above* him; and it is as clear, that he who is *over all*, hath none *equal* to him: therefore the words must of necessity be understood, if of Christ in his own single person, as *set over all creatures*, God the Father being excepted, as in 1 Cor. v. 27. or else as including the Father, who is that God over all: for he testifieth, there is but one God the Father, who is greater than all, and above all, John x. 29. 1 Cor. viii. 6. Eph.

iv. 6.

iv. 6. Neither doth the text say a word about his being in the Godhead, but saith, "that he is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

AGAIN : Christ is called, and hath a name written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords*; Rev. xvi. 19. and so also is God the Father called ; but not in the same sense that Christ is : *for the Father hath set Christ upon his throne, and made him King of kings, and Lord of lords*, as the scripture plainly declares : but God the Father is *made* so by none ; he being *essentially* and *absolutely* the supreme King and Lord of all. In the same sense we may understand those scriptures where Christ, the Son of God, is called "the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, the beginning and the end of all things ;" for he was begotten before all things : all things were made by him, and for him. And it is unreasonable to say, that he then made himself ; for he himself is manifestly excepted : nor is he ranked among the creatures, but declared to be brought forth and begotten before all creation, in and by whom JEHOVAH created all things : "for it pleased the Father that *in him* should all fulness dwell." But in another, and higher sense, *God the Father* is the *first* and the *last*, for Christ was begotten of him, the beginning of his way : and as Christ is *all in all* to his saints, because all fulness dwells in him, as Mediator and head of the church : "so when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power, and shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father ; then God himself, even the Father, shall be all in all ; for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things. To whom be glory for ever. Amen," Rom. xi. 36.

AGAIN :

AGAIN: In Rev. i. 8. "I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." It is doubtful here who is the speaker; but if it be Christ, as is generally supposed, he speaks plainly as having the Father in him, how else can it be reconciled with ver. 4. where the Father only is mentioned as the one JEHOVAH, "who is, and who was, and is to come: and in ver. 5. Christ only is mentioned in his proper person, and as the faithful and true witness, the prince of the kings of the earth, &c. and then, ver. 6. he, Christ, is said to have made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father: ver. 7. he is described as coming in the clouds of heaven to judge the world: and then, ver. 8. he and his Father are represented as united, and making, as it were, one complect being: for when he comes to judgment, he will not come *alone*, but *the Father will come with him*, and judge the world *by him*, as the scripture witnesseth: hence, as hath been already observed, he will come, not only in his own glory, but in the glory of his Father also. See Luke ix. 26. Therefore, with great propriety, the Father is here mentioned, as coming *in* and *with* his Son Jesus Christ, at the last day.

IN the same manner, I conceive, we are to understand 1 Tim. vi. 13—16. "I give thee charge, (saith *Paul*) in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Jesus Christ, that thou keep this commandment until the appearing of Jesus Christ, which in his time he shall shew, *who is*," &c. But the words may, I suppose, be more plainly rendered and explained thus: Which (appearing

pearing of Christ) *he* (viz. the *Father*) *who is the blessed* and only potentate, shall shew in its time, who (the *Father*) is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, whom no man hath seen, nor can see. This description plainly includes both *Father* and *Son*; for it is certain the *Father* is he whom no man hath seen, nor can see. But to understand the words of the *Son* personally, not including the *Father*, is certainly to deny the *Father* to be the living God and supreme ruler of the universe; or else to make two such: now the meaning of the passage seems to be this: *God the Father shewed Christ in weakness*, and suffered him to be *insulted, mocked, and condemned*, when he stood before *Pilate, as if he were not a King*, the chosen of God: but God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by him, and *then HE will shew Christ in his glory*; when all men shall see him, and acknowledge that God the *Father* hath made *that same Jesus* who was crucified, both Lord and Christ. We also know, that when the *Son of God* was made flesh, and manifested to take away our sins, God the *Father* was manifested in flesh; because he was always with him: yea the *Father* himself, *by his own Spirit*, did those divine works which Christ wrought in his name. See John xiv. 10. Matt. xii. 28.

LIKEWISE when Christ said to the *Jews*, "Before *Abraham* was, *I AM*;" he *shows* his union with the *Father*, and that the *Father* spake by him, as he saith in another place, "The words which you hear are not mine, but the *Father's* who sent me:" therefore he said, "*I AM*:" even

as God the Father spake in, and by him, unto *Moses* of old.

AND when *Thomas* said to Jesus, "My Lord, and my God," he, I doubt not, included the Father as dwelling in Christ; and thus understood, his confession entirely agrees with Christ's own words in John xiv. 9. "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me?" &c. and chap. xii. 44. He that believeth on me, believeth not on me (that is, on me alone) but on him that sent me." Therefore, when *Thomas* said to Jesus, "My Lord, and my God," he confessed, and believed, both in the Father and the Son: to me it seems plain, that he then saw what *Philip* had desired before to see, viz. the Father; that is, he saw by faith that the Father dwelt in Christ, and was by union one with him: so that he now understood the words of our Lord, where he saith, "He that seeth me, seeth him that sent me:" and again, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father also." *Thomas*, then, doth not contradict, but entirely agree with the apostle *Paul*, who testifies, "That to us there is but ONE GOD the FATHER, of whom are all things; and one LORD JESUS CHRIST, by whom are all things," 1 Cor. viii. 6.

AFTER the same manner we may understand that scripture, 1 John v. 20. "This is the true God, and eternal life;" which includes both the Father and the Son; as is, I think, plain from those parallel scriptures: "This is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent;" John xvii. 3. and again, "We have seen, and declare unto you, that eternal life,

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which

which was with the FATHER, and was manifested unto us,"
 1 John i. 2. nor will, I humbly conceive, the apostle's words bear any other meaning; for, according to the common way of interpreting that text, it seems to be understood thus: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and (he the Son) hath given us an understanding, that we may know him (the Son) that is true, and we are in him (the Son) that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This," &c. Now is not this interpretation manifestly absurd and false? for it makes Christ to be the *Son of himself*: but the text may, I conceive, be better expounded thus:

WE know that the Son of God is come, and he (God) hath given us an understanding, that we may know him (the Son) that is true, and we are in him (the Son) that is true, even in his (God's) Son, Jesus Christ:—or else thus: We know that the Son of God is come, and he (the Son) hath given us an understanding, that we may know him (the Father) that is *true* ("He that sent me is *true*," John vii. 28.) and we are in him (the Father) that is true, *in or by** his Son Jesus Christ. This person (including the Father who by union is one with him) is the true God, and eternal life.

THIS sense of the words, is likewise agreeable to these scriptures following: "He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God; but whoso continueth in the doctrine, or faith of Christ, he hath *both the Father and the Son*." And again, "If *that* which you have heard

* The particle *by* rendered IN, may as properly be rendered, as it often is, BY OR THROUGH.

from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." Therefore though the pronoun *we*; be singular, yet we are not, in this passage, to interpret it by the strict rules of grammar, as if the true God, and eternal life, meant but *one single person* only; for it is manifest that the apostle speaks of two, viz. of the Father and his Son: therefore it may be referred to either, or to both *as one*, by reason of union. Possibly in the same manner the pronoun *we* in the singular may be used, chap. i. 6. "If we say that we have fellowship with him," i. e. the Father, &c. but not to be exclusion of the Son; for he had said, ver. 3. "Our fellowship is *with the Father*, and *with his Son* Jesus Christ; for he that is *in the Son*, is *in the Father* also," 1 Thess. i. 1. Thus, in different respects, the Father and Son are often represented to us, and spoken of as *one*, and yet are two at the same time.

THE Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are said to be the temple of the New Jerusalem: and the reason is plain, because of their oneness *by union*, and because the saints dwell immediately *in Christ*, and, together with Christ, *in God*: for this Christ prayed his Father, saying, "that they all may be one, *even as we are one*; I in them, and thou in me; that they all may be made perfect in one." Thus they that dwell or believe in Christ, dwell and believe not in him alone, but *in God, by him*.

AGAIN, the throne of God, and of the Lamb, is represented as *one single throne*, before whom the holy inhabitants of heaven are said to serve (not *them*) but *him*; though God

and the Lamb are certainly two; but, because of union, they are represented as one; and because also there is but **ONE GOD in Christ**: in like manner the servants of God, and of Christ, are said not to see (their faces) but *his face*; and not *their* names, but *his* name, is said to be in their foreheads: hence it is all along carried in the singular number, that, as it is written, "GOD may be **ALL** in **ALL**."

It seems, then, not to be agreeable to scripture or truth, to say, that the Son *alone*, in distinction from the Father, is the true God and eternal life. I conclude, therefore, that the apostle doth not mean the person of Christ only exclusive of the Father, or the person of the Father only, exclusive of the Son; but that the Father is the true God, and the Son is that eternal life who was and is with the Father; and they two, by union, are, as hath, I hope, been made to appear from divers scriptures, often spoken of and represented as **ONE**.

THUS God and his Christ, the Father and the Son, are two distinct persons, of different natures, and one greater than the other; but because they are most intimately united, the Father dwelling in the Son, and the Son dwelling in the Father, in which union neither of them acts separately or without the other, therefore, I conceive that they may more properly be called one, than our souls and bodies may be called one. Indeed the rational soul and body of men are not two persons, but *one* only: yet I doubt not but the union between the Father and the Son is thereby faintly resembled and represented to us: for as the spirit of man is united to, and dwells

dwells in, the tabernacle of his body; so God the Father is united to, and dwells as in a temple, in the person of his Son. But I apprehend that the union between Christ and the believer is still a more proper emblem and resemblance of it; for of the believer he saith, "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit:" Our Lord also himself saith, "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me." And from hence it appears that the Godhead of the man Christ Jesus is supreme Godhead, because it is that of the Father: and is it not also manifest, that the one living and true God, in point of personality, is ever made known to us under the character of God the Father? In what respect Christ is called God in Psalm xiv. and Heb. i. where he is evidently distinguished from another, called absolutely God, and his Father, may be easily understood and explained from what hath been said. Likewise, how the works of creation are ascribed to Christ, is also manifest; for God the Father created all things by his son: to whom he saith, "And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth," &c. for he made nothing without him. As to Heb. iii. 4. "He that built all things is God," is, I think, plainly meant of the Father, for he is distinguished from Christ his Son, who is said, ver. 3. to build the house, i. e. the church: and then the apostle adds, "For every house is builded by some man, as the house of the church, by the man Christ Jesus;" for speaking, of him in the prophet, he saith, "He shall build the temple of JEHOVAH:" but he did not this alone, and of himself, for God the Father did it, in
and

and by him; therefore it follows, "He that built all things is God. So, throughout the scriptures, the redemption, sanctification, and complete salvation of man, is ever ascribed to God the Father by his Son Jesus Christ.

WHEN in Acts xx. 28. God* is said to "purchase the church with his own blood," it may be understood thus; either, *first*, because the Son of God, whose blood was shed for the redemption of the church, was personally united to God, and so counted one with him; much after the same manner as when Christ said to Saul, "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest;" for the saints by union are counted one with Christ. Hence he saith again, "He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me," Luke x. 16. See also Matt. xxv. 40, 45. Or else, *secondly*, because the person, even Christ, who laid down his life for us, was a Lamb of God's own providing, and was God's own Son; and therefore God is said to "purchase the church with his own blood," because it was with the blood of his own Son: but it is blasphemous to say, that JEHOVAH suffered, or that God died; nor is there any thing like it, that I know of, in all the scripture. That text in 1. John iii. 16. says no such thing: the words, *τὸ αἷμα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, of God, are declared not to

* This text, I am told, was read otherwise in Irenæus's time (and in the best copies still) he cites it, "The church of the Lord;" thus referring it to Christ; which is undoubtedly the apostle's meaning; and not only so, but the last clause likewise is by some read differently, and stands thus: "Feed the church of God which he hath purchased *τὸ αἷμα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ*, with the blood of his own [Son]: and thus read, the sense is clear; for the Son is naturally understood, and easily supplied: and thus it entirely agrees with what the same apostle saith Rom. viii. 32. "God spared not his own Son."

be found in divers copies; nor are they in the best printed editions of the *Greek Testament* that I have seen. The *Geneva* translation renders the passage, "Hereby have we perceived love, because he (namely Christ†) laid down his life for us." And it is plain from the whole epistle, as well as from the other scriptures, that it was not GOD, but his CHRIST, the SON of God, that shed his blood, and laid down his life for us, John i. 7. and iii. 8: see also iv. 9, 10.

MANY persons, in this controversy, lay no small stress on Isa. xlviii. 16. "And now the Lord God, and his Spirit hath sent me." If, as some suppose, Christ is the person here speaking; yet it is not possible to understand it of him as JEHOVAH, for he is evidently distinguished from him: it must, therefore, be understood of Christ as man Mediator in his own proper person: and thus it may be well explained by chap. i. 4. "The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary," &c. and by chap. lxi. 1. "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because JEHOVAH hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek," &c. but if, as others suppose, they are the words of the prophet, we may then understand them in agreement with Zech. ii. 9. "Ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me:" and chap. iv. 9. "Thou

† So DIODATI, in his notes, rightly expounds it; for though the antecedent be not expressed, it is easily supplied; nor is there the least danger of any one's mistaking it, that is not blinded with prejudice. Ask all the apostles, nay ask a mere novice in the faith, who it was that laid down his life for us? would he not immediately answer, Jesus Christ.

Thalt

shalt know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you."

LIKEWISE, "by the Lord and his Spirit," there is no occasion to understand two persons, nor is it, in my opinion, right so to do; for the words, I conceive, only declare the manner of JEHOVAH's sending his servants, viz. by the powerful efficacy of his Spirit poured out upon them: for when God speaks, and commands his servants to do his will, if he did not, at the same time, put his Spirit upon them; they would have neither wisdom, nor courage to do his commandments; and therefore by the Lord and his Spirit we are not to understand two persons, but as denoting the efficacious manner of God's sending his servants on his important errands, that they may be effectually done. See Ezek. iii. 4, 14. Micah iii. 8. God reveals and works all things by his Spirit, not as by another person, but by his own proper quickening Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 10, 12. therefore the last clause may be understood as explanatory of the former, and read thus: "*Even his Spirit hath sent me.*" Besides, it seems not proper to understand it of two persons, because it respects *one single act* at one and the same time. So in 2 Sam. xxiii. 23. "The Spirit of JEHOVAH, saith *David*, spake by me," which is the same as when he presently adds, "The God of *Israel* said," &c. and his son *Solomon* declares it was JEHOVAH that spake to his Father *David*, 1 Kings v. 5. Therefore, when the scripture saith, JEHOVAH spake, or the Spirit of JEHOVAH spake by his prophets, these expressions are *synonymous terms*, and mean just the same, and are to be understood not of two divine persons, but of one only. And thus all the prophets

prophets of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost : and had not God put his Spirit upon them, they could neither have known, nor spoken the mind and word of God ; but the living God that spake in and by them is always to be understood *personally* of God the Father, as is certain from Heb. i. 1, 2. “ God, who spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us *by his Son*. See also Acts iii. 13, 18, 26.

Is omniscience and omnipotence ascribed to Christ ? The reason is plain, because the Father *sheweth him all things* which himself doth, and hath, in an unlimited manner, filled him with his own omniscient and omnipotent Spirit : Hence the living word of God is said to be quick and powerful, &c. yea all things are naked and *opened* unto him : and thus *John* in vision beheld the Lamb as having seven horns and seven eyes, *which are the seven spirits of God*, sent forth into all the earth. But the only supreme object of divine worship is GOD ; even that God who dwells in Christ, as in a living temple. And with respect to Christ's own person, he is to be distinctly honored and worshipped as the Mediator, and King of the church, who hath by his blood redeemed us unto God. This, and this only, is the reason assigned by the heavenly hosts, for their falling down before the Lamb : “ Thou art worthy, they cry, for thou wast slain.” Observe, they do not say, For thou art God ; but *for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us unto God* : and this peculiar honor is due to Christ, and will be due to him for ever, for the Godhead that supported him could not die nor suffer : and, I sup-

pose, that on this account he had worship paid him, and received it in the days of his flesh, i. e. as Christ the Son of God, whom he sent to save sinners, and whom he had appointed Lord of all. But as the Father and the Son together, not separated but united, did at the same time redeem and now saves his people; therefore jointly and together are they worshipped and praised by the saints; though not exactly on the same ground, nor in the same degree, but God as giving his Son to us, and Christ as dying for us; for as the *Israelites* of old, at the same time, and by the same external act of obedience, worshipped JEHOVAH, and the King, even *David* his servant, and representative in the visible church, without being charged with idolatry, though they knew that *David* was but a man, God's servant, and not a divine person; so God and his Christ are distinctly, and at the same time, to be worshipped, but not with equal supreme worship as two *co-equal* persons in the Godhead, for the Father alone in his own person is to be worshipped as JEHOVAH, and Christ as his anointed King in *Zion*. I suppose, therefore, that when he brought the first-begotten into the world, and said, "Let all the angels of God worship him," it respected *mediatorial*, or inferior worship, as *God's representative*, and as the Mediator between God and men: nor am I alone in this opinion, for the excellent Mr. *Hervey*, paraphrasing that text, says, "Shall we suppose this was a command to worship the Son in the sublime capacity of *God over all*? This, surely, could not be the sense of the words; because a *command of such an import must be needless*. This was the *natural*, the *unchangeable*, the *indispensable duty* of all creatures; and
such

such as those *superior intelligences* could not but easily discern; such as those upright spirits could not but readily obey, without any particular injunction." "The command, therefore, I apprehend, is rather referable to the *humanity* of our blessed Redeemer; to that nature in IMMANUEL, which purged away our sins, by becoming a propitiatory sacrifice. *This* was made higher than the angels: *This* had an illustrious name given it, to which every knee should bow: *This* was exalted into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject to the man Christ Jesus*."

It appears, then, that this evangelical writer saw no impropriety in distinguishing between *supreme* and *inferior* worship; and that there is an *inferior worship due to Christ as Mediator*; and that God, in his word, hath appointed and commanded it, is, I think, plainly implied in those words, "He hath given him a name above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow," &c. and it is evident that Mr. *Hervey* understood them in the same sense.

THE noise then that some people make about the giving inferior worship to Christ as man and Mediator, as if it were idolatry, appears not to be founded in reason, or truth. And Mr. *Hervey's* paraphrase of the text is plainly agreeable to the other parts of scripture, and therefore I have cited it. For if kings, and rulers, &c. whom God hath appointed to represent, and judge for him in the earth, and hath given them authority so to do, are sometimes

* *Hervey's Letters*, vol. I. p. 136, 137.

called God and worshipped, 2 Thess. ii. 4. not with *supreme*, but *subordinate worship* : and if *Moses*, *David*, and other rulers in the antient *Jewish* church were *called God*, and *worshipped*, who were but types of Christ ; how much more is Christ to be so called and worshipped, who is JEHOVAH's immediate representative, whom he hath made King and Lord of all, and hath also appointed him to be the judge of quick and dead ? Besides all this, CHRIST alone is personally united to JEHOVAH, and he only was crucified for us, and hath redeemed us unto God, by his blood. And if Christ, as such, be not called GOD, and worshipped with inferior worship, as the *Mediator* and *King in Zion*, he, in this respect, is not made equal to those that were types of him ; but, let men say what they will, Christ must have, and hath, the pre-eminence in all things ; for God hath commanded it : neither else would the *man Christ*, who died and rose again, and is exalted at God's right hand, have any proper honor paid him at all, either by men or angels : but we are assured, that God hath given him honor and glory ; and a name that is *above every name* (but he who gave it him is manifestly excepted) and hath commanded that every knee should bow to him ; and this is that honor or worship which God wills he should receive, and which all the saints and holy angels give unto him, as God's exalted King and Mediator. But we do not, therefore, make *two objects* of *supreme* divine worship, that only is due to one, even to God the Father : therefore the worship that is paid to Christ, redounds to the glory of God the Father, even as the worship which the *saints themselves* are said to receive (see Isa.

Isa. lx. 14. and Rev. iii. 9.) redounds to the glory of Christ, and of God by him.

“ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us ; unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” Eph. iii. 20, 21. “ Unto the *Lamb* also that was slain, even Jesus the Son of God, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father : To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” Rev. i. 5, 6.



C H A P. X.

Contains Observations on certain Creeds, &c.

IN things pertaining to God and the salvation of our souls, we ought not hastily to receive, nor implicitly believe that which is proposed to us, or obtruded on us, by any human authority whatever ; for we are commanded to try all things, and after trial being made, then to embrace, and hold fast that which is good. I hope, therefore, it will not be esteemed presumptuous in me, nor criminal, that I have ventured to question the *real orthodoxy* of certain creeds and opinions, which of a long time have been commonly received amongst us ; especially as these doctrines are professedly built on the authority of divine revelation ; and we would only examine and try them by that infallible rule of faith, the holy scriptures : for if they will not stand the test of a fair trial by the word of God, they ought not any longer to be received of us, as divinely true ; but rather to be rejected by us as certainly false.

I CONCEIVE also, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as stated and set forth in the ATHANASIAN creed, is not well under-

understood, nor heartily believed in general, either by some that read, or by others that hear it.

THIS creed says, "That Father, Son, and Spirit, are *three* co-essential, co-eternal, and co-equal persons; and that we are compelled by the christian verity to acknowledge every person by HIMSELF to be both God and Lord;" yet it immediately adds, "We are forbidden by the catholic religion to say, *There are three Gods, and three Lords.*" Can any contradiction be more palpable? Do not the words plainly declare, that in the *same sense* in which they are *three*, in the very same sense they are but *one*? for it doth not say, there are three *called persons*, subsisting in one God, and one Lord; but there are three, *each* of which by himself, is both God and Lord; and yet it is immediately added, that there is but *one God, and one Lord*. If this is not positively affirming, and flatly denying the very same thing, I think there can be no such thing as a contradiction in terms or language. Might it not with equal propriety and truth have been said, there are *three*, each of which is by himself a distinct person; and yet they are not *three* persons, but *one only*? for it is as easy to understand how *three persons* can be *one person*; as how *three gods* can be *one God*: but the scripture saith, "To us there is but one God, the Father." It is said, we received this creed from the church of *Rome*, which the scripture calls the *mother of harlots*. Can then any of her offspring be legitimate? Is it to be supposed that they who have corrupted the scriptures themselves, and have decreed unwritten traditions, and *human expositions*, to be of equal authority with the divine word, would retain any sound confession,

confession of faith among them? But custom and the traditions of men are too often looked upon as sacred, both by the wise and unwise: the mind is blinded by the dust of antiquity, and the judgment biassed in favor of what our forefathers have believed and taught. Thus light is often put for darkness, and error for truth: many *blindly* follow their leaders, and are content to believe what they never examined nor understood; witness *transubstantiation* among the *Papists*, and *consubstantiation* among the *Lutherans*, and perhaps I may add the doctrine of the Trinity, as *commonly received* among the *Protestants*. Do we not too hastily run into an imitation of opinions, and men, and churches? Hence, I conceive, many *Protestant Clergymen*, and *others*, conclude their discourses after this manner: “*New to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three persons, and one God:*” but the conclusion and premises do not seem well to agree together; for the conclusion naturally is, and according to the premises ought to be, *three gods, and one God*; else it should have been to the *person* of the Father, &c. But did any of the holy prophets or apostles ever speak thus? Is it to be found in their writings? Certainly not. How is it then that we have learnt to be wise above what is written? Nor do I see what end it can answer, unless it be to lead the ignorant hearers into the notion of a Trinity of gods, which it is probable many of them believe.

THE inconveniences attending the *commonly received* doctrine of the Trinity, with the disagreement and self-contradictions of some eminent divines, who are advocates for that doctrine, have, we conceive, in some degree,

degree, been made manifest. But it will not, I hope, be imagined that my design hath been to rob any of them of that honor and reputation, which, as great divines and good men, they have justly acquired in the christian church. I sincerely esteem and honor many of them for their valuable writings and useful labors in the church of Christ; and, I hope, through grace, I can truly say, that I have not opposed them on the article of the Trinity from a spirit of envy or malevolence, but from necessity, having been compelled to it; and for the truth's sake. I have only aimed to point out some of their mistakes (at least what appeared so to me) and have endeavored also to shew, that the very doctrines which they abhor, are a necessary consequence of their own sentiments:—that in reality they no better agree among themselves than with some others, who differ from them both.—That *Arianism*, *Sabellianism*, and *Tritheism*, though they professedly, and I doubt not very sincerely, oppose those errors; are yet in their turns all of them held forth, and even defended by them. Is it not *Arianism* to assert, that Christ, as a divine person, was begotten, and that, as such, he received his being from another? and that this divine person was reduced to a state of indigence, sufferings, and death? Is it not *Sabellianism* to say, that the names of Father, Son, and Spirit, are œconomical, *names of office*, and not *names of nature and relation*? Is it not *Tritheism* to say, there are *three self-existent distinct persons*, of or in one nature, however undivided; and that *each* of these is *by himself* JEHOVAH, the *living God*? I do not indeed wonder that we (for I include myself) have been thus taught,

and led to speak of Father, Son, and Spirit; considering how we have been awed by the authority of churches, antient councils, penal laws, &c. and, at the same time, have been warned not to pry much, if at all, into so great a mystery: if we dared to attempt it, have not the creeds of *Athanasius*, *Hutchinson*, &c. with some learned expositors, been laid before us as standards of orthodoxy? So that, instead of trying their writings by the infallible word of God, we have been rather led to try the scriptures by them. If we differ in sentiment, or even in mode of expression, ever so little, from such creeds and authors, we are suspected of being unsound in our principles; nor will our appeal to the scriptures themselves be sufficient to clear us of the charge, in the opinion of many modern professors. What is more common than to hear persons appeal to such an author, or such a preacher, for the soundness of their faith? It is not the apostle *Peter*, or *Paul*, or *John*, but such a minister saith it, and “*he is a learned man, therefore he knows; and he is a good man, therefore he will not declare a falsehood.*” However plausible such reasoning may be in the judgment of simple and slothful hearers, yet it is not to be relied on; for the most learned and best of men may be ignorant and err in some things; nor is any one of them infallible. The sure and safe ground of every christian’s faith is not the word of man, nor the *sense* which any man, or body of men, however learned, and however pious, may put on scripture; but the *scripture itself*, which hath a certain determinate meaning; and, in every grand doctrine of faith, lies open to the plainest christian that is divinely enlightened, and taught

taught of God. "Search, saith Christ, the scriptures, for they are they that testify of me."

THAT the *Papists* should impose *their sense* of scripture as the standard of orthodoxy, is acting agreeably to their own tenets; but that *Protestants* should do the same, is certainly contrary to their avowed principles, and tends to lead us back again to *Papish* darkness, ignorance, and superstition: for if the scriptures themselves, which we, by the mercy and good providence of God, have well and faithfully translated in our own native language, are not plain and easy to be understood by a common *English* reader, what advantage is it to have them translated at all? if the learned divine only knows, and must fix the true sense and meaning of scripture for the vulgar hearers; and if they themselves are not capable of trying their words, and doctrine by the scriptures, as translated for their use, they might as well (as to any real benefit which they can receive from them) have still remained in an unknown tongue.

THAT some places might have been better translated, and that a few passages are improperly rendered, we deny not; but I believe that I may venture to affirm, that they are truly and faithfully translated in every *essential* that relates to doctrine, or practice; both for the instruction, comfort, and establishment of all those that sincerely seek after God, and love his salvation.

It is a dangerous practice, and rises no higher than a human faith, to embrace and rely on the *sense* that may be put on the scriptures by any man, or set of men whatever; if that sense is not plainly held forth, and declared to us

in scripture; for we cannot else receive and rest upon it, as the word of God.

THERE is an essential difference between a divine and human faith; betwixt believing God, and believing man. "Faith properly signifieth our assent to a thing that is told us, and because it is told us. If the revelation be from men, it is no more than a *human faith*. If it be from God, and we believe the thing, because God hath revealed it to us, this is *divine faith*. Nor ought any thing more to be the care of the ministers of the gospel than this; viz. to call men to believe, and so to endeavor, that their faith *may not stand in the wisdom of men*. This will shew every conscientious minister the vanity of not proving what he saith from holy writ. All other preaching is but either *dictating*, as if men were to believe what the preacher saith upon his authority; or *philosophizing*, acting the part of a philosopher, or orator at Athens; not the part of a minister of the gospel*."

LET us, therefore, try all creeds, and all writers by the sacred canon of scripture, comparing spiritual things with spiritual, and we shall then, I doubt not, through the teaching of the Holy Ghost, come to a satisfactory and settled understanding in the scripture doctrine of the Father, Son, and Spirit: and as clearly conceive of it (so far as it may be known of us in this life) as of any doctrine in the bible; for I think there is none more clearly, nor indeed so fully revealed. Perhaps it will be said, that the scheme here proposed is equally embarrassed with dif-

* Pool's Annotations.

sculties, contradictory, and unintelligible. I shall not wonder if it appear so to some persons, who have long been taught otherwise, and are obstinately tenacious of their preconceived opinions.

To such objectors I would only say with the apostle, "Prove all things by the written word, and then hold fast that which is good:" for, I humbly hope, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as here set forth, will appear both rational and scriptural to those who without prejudice search the scriptures, and diligently compare what we have ventured to propose on the subject, with the divine word: but if the scripture will not bear us out in what we have said, let no man receive it: for there is no infallible teacher but the divine Spirit; and no infallible rule, but the divine word.

If it be still said that the doctrine pleaded for is erroneous and heretical, we should be glad to have it pointed out to us; for, by the rule of the divine word, and authority of God in Christ, we desire to have our principles tried, and judged. We study and pray as in the sight of God, not only to be free from the charge, but also from the guilt of every capital error.

HERESY, as I conceive, is an error that affects, and saps the foundation of the christian faith; which a man that is an heretic *voluntarily* falls into, willingly embraces, and obstinately defends. "He, therefore, saith the apostle, that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being *condemned of himself*;" that is, he sinneth not through infirmity, but of choice, wilfully shutting his eyes against the evidence of truth; and had rather continue in his error,
than

than be convinced and brought out of it. He also seems to be influenced by some corrupt motive of pride, or ambition; covetousness, or lust: and because the sound doctrine of the gospel will not justify him in any of these abominations, he therefore falls in with, and embraces some contrary opinion; that, as much as in him lies, he may quiet his conscience, and maintain a sort of consistency between his principles and his practice. This seems to be the foundation of all heresy; "they speak perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." But no man can be justly charged with this sin, that doth not worship idols, nor deny Jesus to be the Son of God; and that God the Father was in him reconciling the world unto himself by him; and that doth not deny the scripture doctrine of justification by faith in his blood, nor the necessity of holiness in heart and life; and who doth not hold any contrary doctrine, that is naturally and necessarily destructive of any one of these great truths: that which adds to, or detracts from, the word of God in any thing essential to salvation, may be called an heresy; because it makes the way to heaven either *wider* or *narrower* than God himself hath made it. Thus some of old, among the first christians, who were of the *sect of the Pharisees*, made *circumcision* necessary to salvation; as the *Papists* have long since made their doctrine of *transubstantiation*, &c. On the contrary, *Hymeneus* and *Philetus* denied the doctrine of the resurrection: Some again, who professed to know God, in works denied him, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness; and those, by a natural and necessary consequence *denied the Lord that bought them*: for if there is no resurrection of the dead, then

Christ

Christ is not raised: and if believers on him are not redeemed from the guilt, and delivered from the dominion of sin, then Christ was not manifested to take away our sins, nor doth he save his people from them. We know that the sect of the *Sadducees*, and the sect of the *Pharisees*, falsely charged the apostles and christians of old with the sin of heresy; when they, at the same time, were justly chargeable with it. In like manner the Protestants are now condemned as heretics by the Papists, when they themselves are guilty of the charge; for by them especially damnable heresies have been brought into the church. And many, as was prophesied of old, have followed, and do yet follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth is evil spoken of," 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2. And as they darkened and corrupted the scripture doctrine of justification by faith alone in Christ, from which capital error many Protestants, by divine grace and power, have been already delivered; so, I conceive, the Papists also have darkened and corrupted the scripture doctrine of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; from whence also, in due time, I doubt not, God will also deliver his people.

AGAIN: That which secures the salvation of the believer, and gives God the glory of our salvation, cannot be a heresy: but the doctrine which we contend for, doth secure the salvation of every believer, and give the whole glory to God only: therefore it is no heresy.

THE *major*, I imagine, will be denied by none, therefore I shall only attempt to prove the *minor*; which being proved, the consequence must necessarily follow. The *minor* then may be proved thus:

WE

WE believe and maintain, that all things relating to our salvation are of God ; he alone laid the eternal plan, and prepared the way for it, and hath carried it into execution : he laid the plan in the counsel of his own will, prepared the way for it in Christ his Son, and carries it into execution by the agency and power of his eternal Spirit ; therefore, of necessity, the whole glory is given to JEHOVAH, the only living and true God.

2. THE salvation of believers is secured, not only because the whole work is ascribed to God ; but because it is, in every respect, *suited to the circumstances* and necessities of fallen men. God will be sanctified in them that approach him ; therefore a Mediator and high priest, who knew no sin, is provided for us : this is Jesus, the Son of God, who, as a substitute for sinners, was made under the law, fulfilled all its righteous demands, and endured its curse ; whom God also raised from the dead, and hath exalted him with his own right hand, to be a prince and a Saviour : seeing therefore God is well pleased, and his justice fully satisfied by the obedience of Christ, as a surety for men ; believing sinners are now redeemed from the curse of the law, and have a just title to life, through him : nor do we need, nor can we receive, any other righteousness, save that of Christ only, to justify us before God.

AGAIN : The renovation and sanctification of our nature is, we believe, absolutely necessary to salvation : for this purpose God the Father, through his Son Jesus Christ, gives us his holy Spirit to quicken and renew our souls. *Now he that is justified by the blood of Christ, the Son of God ;*

and

and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, hath every requisite to eternal salvation : and as both these are equally held and secured by us, as by any other person, who, in the article of the Trinity, may differ from us ; we can no more be justly charged with heresy than any of our opposers. If it is not as possible, rational, and scriptural, to believe that a man may be justified, sanctified, and saved upon our principles here laid down, as upon any other ; I should be glad to have the reason pointed out to us, why it is thought otherwise ? Is it because we do not hold a *Trinity of persons in the Godhead* ? We conceive that he who holds it thus, is, in that respect, no gainer ; and that he who believes that God is but *one proper divine person*, or being, is no loser : for may we not insist upon it, that we know of no difference ; nor have we any distinct ideas between three proper persons in one essence, and three distinct divine beings, or gods ? Besides, God the Father, who is but one divine person, and who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and hath also raised him from the dead, is (in the view of our faith) every way equal, both in purpose, counsel, and operation, to the *three divine persons*, which are generally pleaded for : for *he*, the Father, sent his Son to save the world ; he sustained him under all his dreadful sufferings ; he raised him from the dead ; he exalted him, &c. *he*, the same divine person, even the Father, in and by Christ, now quickens the dead members of Christ, unites them to him, and makes them meet for glory, through the power of his eternal Spirit, which is given unto us. For we believe that the Spirit is included in God the Father, and essential to his being ; whereby

he worketh all our works both in us and for us. And is not this equivalent to the whole work of the Spirit in man's salvation, that is usually ascribed to him as a distinct person in the Godhead? but *if a distinct person, how could he be the same God?* will the bare *ipse dixit* of our dissident brethren make it so? or is it sufficient to say, that he is distinguished by personal characters, &c. when he is declared in a multitude of *plainer* scriptures to be the Spirit of another person, even of God the Father, and to be sent of the Father; and that the Father works by him, as by his *own Spirit*? Doth not also the personal distinction pleaded for, convey gross ideas to the mind, and lead us to conceive of the sacred Three, as of three distinct gods? or will it be said, that, without admitting of this distinction, there can be no everlasting covenant? Why not? was not Christ begotten in eternity before all time, and was not the covenant made with him?, and do not most sound Protestant divines so speak of the covenant? and with whom should it be made, but with him that was to perform the conditions of it? But then the parties, you will say, are not *strictly equal*: Granted. And what need was there for it? nay, was it possible that they should be *properly equals*? seeing the condition laid on one party was to obey and suffer?

Now, if one is the *infinite* God, could he not send and support the other in the performance of all the conditions required of him? and did he not promise so to do, and hath he not done it? and was not the other party in the covenant called to obey the law, suffer, and die? and could that be a divine person in the Godhead? therefore

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one of them must be a man, and inferior to God : if otherwise, could he need or receive any support ? or could he obey and die for men ? or will any one presume to say, that the Father could not support his Son Christ Jesus under his sufferings, as well as any other divine person ? Is not also Christ's righteousness, with as much propriety, called the righteousness of God, considered as in union with God the Father, as if united to any other divine person ? Therefore we conclude, that our view is clear of the errors of *Sabellians*, *Arians*, and all *proper Trinitarians* ; and that we maintain the *unity* of God, and the proper *personal distinction* between the Father and the Son : and, finally, that we give God and his Christ the whole glory of our salvation, and secure the safety of believing souls upon the most solid and rational ground of divine revelation.

WE wanted for a Saviour a man that had never sinned, that he might obey the law, and bear the curse for us ; and Christ is that Saviour, the chosen, the anointed, the only begotten Son of God. It was also necessary both for him and for us, that he should be both *sent*, and *divinely strengthened* in and for the work, by JEHOVAH himself : therefore God, who sent his Christ, was also with him, and in him reconciling sinners unto himself, *by* him.

THUS the Father and the Son together, God and his Christ, is one perfect Saviour ; one Lord, and one God. Here we rest, fully satisfied with the reason and ground of our faith and hope towards God in Christ. With understanding also we can join the heavenly hosts of redeemed

saints above, and, in our measure, sing with them, and cry aloud, *Salvation!* To whom? Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

I AM desirous that every body should understand me; therefore, in order to make the point as plain as possible, I will endeavor to present the reader with a short view of the various schemes of *Arians, &c. &c.* respecting the Trinity.

1. THE *Arian* notion seems to be this—that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are truly and properly three real distinct persons; so that they contend for a Trinity of divine persons in the strictest manner possible: they say, likewise, that they are one in mind, consent, and will; and in this sense they hold a *Trinity in Unity*: but by the Son, or word of God, and also by the Spirit of God, they understand two created beings, who owe their existence to the Father's will and power; and are also different in nature from him, and inferior to him. They likewise call each person *by himself* GOD, in the most express terms, saying, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

BY the WORD of God they seem to understand a person, distinct from the man Christ Jesus; or else they suppose, that the WORD supplied, in Christ, the place of a human spirit; but if they do not understand by the WORD, the human soul of Christ, they must then deny him to be a true and perfect man.

I APPREHEND also, that they do not consider God the Father as constantly, inseparably, and *personally* united to his Son Christ Jesus; nor as sustaining and strengthening him

him under his sufferings; neither do they count the Father's Godhead to be the Godhead of Christ, by union with him: but they ascribe another distinct Godhead to him.

If this be a true representation of *Arianism*, we differ from them; *first*, in that we believe Christ to be the Son of God *as man*; and not in any other nature: *secondly*, that he was from the beginning, is, and ever will be most intimately, and *personally* united to GOD the FATHER: *Thirdly*, That GOD was in Christ his Son, when he bore our sins, and was made a curse for us: and that therefore Christ did not of himself, and by himself alone, redeem the world; but as in union with, and as sent and supported by God the Father. *Fourthly*, That the Father's Godhead is the Godhead of Christ, as dwelling in him, and united to him. *Fifthly*, In that we believe there are not three gods, but ONE only; for the *Arian* creed doth in our apprehension express a Trinity of gods; and that as full as any other Trinitarian whatever. *Sixthly*, That the Holy Spirit is not in nature different from the Father, nor a person distinct from him; but is essentially the same with JEHOVAH, whose Spirit he is.

2. THE *Sabellian* notion seems to be this:—That the Father, Son, and Spirit are only a *trinity* of names, or characters, belonging to one and the same person; and that the one God hath assumed the name of Father in one respect, and in another respect the name of Son, and in another, the name of Holy Spirit: they are only with them names of office, and not of nature. They not only reject all personal distinctions in the Godhead (for in that

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I think they are right) ; but they do not admit of any proper personal distinction between the Father and the Son, which I reckon to be their great error.

We differ then from *Sabellians*. *First*, In that we believe *Father* and *Son* are *not one and the same person*, under different names, or characters ; but are *two* proper distinct persons : and that it was the Son alone who obeyed and suffered for the redemption of man ; and not the Father in any sense whatsoever. The Father, by his infinite Godhead, was indeed united to the Son and dwelt in him when he laid down his life for us ; but the divine nature cannot suffer ; so that we are no *Patristians*. *Secondly*, In that the Son was a *proper Mediator* between God and man, which the *Sabellians* seem to deny. *Thirdly*, In that we believe the Holy Spirit is not a name of office, but of nature ; and that Deity itself sustains no proper office, but Christ alone bears every office, and is appointed to each of them by the Father.

3. THE *Athanasians* seem to hold a proper Trinity of distinct persons in the divine nature, yet not as absolutely equal ; that is to say, not as self-existent : for although the divine nature is by them declared to be the same in all, and in each of the sacred Three ; yet they affirm, that one of the divine persons, who alone is properly self-existent, *begat* the person of the Son in his divine nature and essence ; and that another divine person was *produced* in the same Godhead, by the joint spiration both of the Father and Son together.

NOTWITHSTANDING this, they affirm, that the whole three divine persons are co-eternal, and that neither is
before

before or after other. Is not *this*, according to our ideas of things, a plain contradiction to the former? They further add, that each person is by himself both God and Lord. For a more particular account of this matter, I refer the reader to the creed itself.

Now that *one* should be *from another*, and begotten, and yet *neither* of the two persons be *before*, or *after other*; likewise, that there should be *three persons really distinct*, so that one is not the other; and that *each person* also should be *by himself* both God and Lord; and yet that the three together should not be *three gods*, and *three lords*, but *ONE only*; seems to me an assertion no where contained in the scripture, nor intelligible.

WE differ, then, from the *Athanasians*, in that we believe, there is but *one proper person in the Godhead*, and that a person in the divine essence, who is the *LIVING GOD*, is *not begotten*: But we agree with them in this, that there is but *one* divine person, unoriginated, and *self-existent*.

2dly, WE agree in this also, that the Holy Spirit is of the same divine nature and essence with the Father.

3dly, THAT the Son is a distinct person from the Father, and *properly begotten* of him.

4thly, THAT Christ hath the name, Son of God, not *æconomically*, or by office, but to express his *proper relation* to God, as being his *express image*, and *begotten* of him.

5thly, THAT, *as a Son only*, he is *a person distinct* from the Father.

4. THE *Hutchinsonian* creed seems to be this:—That Father, Son, and Spirit, are not names of nature or relation in the Godhead; nor do these names at all express their

their *personal* properties or relations to each other; but they suppose them to be names of office voluntarily, and arbitrarily assumed by the sacred Three: so that he who is called the Father might, if he pleased, have been the Son, and the Son the Father; because they are mere official names, and consequently may be taken up, laid down, or changed at the pleasure of those who voluntarily assumed them. They say also (if I understand them right) that there are three divine *self-existent persons*: but what constitutes their personality, they do not tell us: They absolutely deny that *paternity*, &c. doth it. But if Father, Son, and Spirit, are only names of office, and the sacred Three are only made known to us by names of office, and not of nature, it is, I think, possible that they may not be *three persons*, but *one only*; for it is certain that *one person may bear three or more names, and sustain different offices*: and it is much more reasonable to suppose this of the infinite Creator, than of a finite creature; so that there seems, *in this respect*, to be no material difference between them and the *Sabellians*.

CHRIST hath many names, as the Word, and Son of God, &c. and sustains the different offices of a Prophet, Priest, and King, and yet he is but one person. And if JEHOVAH hath made himself known to us by the names of Father, Son, and Spirit, and these are only names of office, it is possible, and, I think, most probable, that the names which are merely official, do not declare a Trinity of divine persons; but that the Godhead may be but one person only: if otherwise, is it not reasonable to suppose

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that the name, proper to each distinct person in the essence, would have been mentioned somewhere in the divine records; seeing the *official names*, or characters, do not necessarily declare more persons than one. They tell us, indeed, that JEHOVAH, the one living and true God, doth exist in *three distinct intelligent persons*, and agents. But if this be the case, and it be an article of our faith, surely the scripture would have revealed it to us; if not, this notion of theirs seems to be the same with that of *Tritheists*.

How happy is it for these gentlemen that they sometimes contradict themselves, and presently deny what they a little before affirmed! Hence they keep clear of the charge of heresy. If they affirm that there are three self-existent persons, or spirits in the divine nature; they again declare there is but one God, but one JEHOVAH, who is certainly a *self-existent Spirit*, and person: "God is a spirit," John iv. 24. And, according to my weak apprehension, there are, in each of these schemes, very manifest and palpable contradictions, though they may appear otherwise in the eyes of some that speak, and of others that perhaps, without due examination or understanding, readily embrace them.

Now from this scheme of the *Hutchinsonians* we differ, in that we believe JEHOVAH is but *one self-existent person* and Spirit, not *two or three*. Secondly, We differ from them, in that we believe Christ, as a proper person, is God's *own Son*, and BEGOTTEN of him: and that it is a name of nature, and not a name of office. But, Thirdly, We agree with them in believing that *no person*

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begotten

begotten is self-existent, or is, as such, equal with him that begat him.

Now, from hence, both our differences and agreement with them may, I conceive, be clearly seen; and which of the schemes is most consonant with the word of God, I shall leave to be determined by the judicious and christian reader, who believes the doctrine to be of real importance, and will try every opinion as he ought, by the standard of all truth, even the divine word; for the holy scriptures are able to make us wise unto salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus. To whom be glory and dominion for ever. Amen.



C H A P. XI.

Contains a short View of the different Sentiments of certain divines on the Covenant of Grace; together with observations on their manner of expounding divers scriptures relating to the Trinity.

IT was my design to have contrasted the opposite opinions of several divines, and others, on the person of Christ, &c. but as I find this would swell my volume too much, I shall content myself with giving a specimen of their differences on the article of the Covenant of Grace.

ON THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

“ THE *first* covenant was made with Adam, for himself and us. Breaking it, he lost his original righteousness, and became subject to death. It pleased therefore the SECOND PERSON of the adorable TRINITY, to undertake our cause, to *become our surety*, and *put himself in our stead*. With him the second covenant was made. He was charged with the performance of the conditions, hereby to obtain pardon and righteousness, grace and glory, for

all his people. "I have made a covenant with my *chosen One*," is the language of the *Most High*; and the terms ~~were not your worthiness, or mine~~; but the incarnation, the obedience, the death of God's everlasting Son*."

"THE counsel of peace shall be between them both," Zech. iv. 12, &c. Here, I think, the covenant is mentioned, and the parties are specified. The *counsel of peace*, if I mistake not, signifies the mysterious and unsearchable contrivance, formed for the recovery of ruined men; formed and carried into execution by the Lord Almighty, or God the Father; and that illustrious person who is to *build the temple and bear the glory*†."

IN a note on the passage, he descants on the prophet's description of the Redeemer, &c. Thus, "His *person*: he is the *man*, or, as the Hebrew imports, the *real*, but at the same time the illustrious man—whose name is the *branch*. His *office*; it is to build the temple, the church of the elect—which he shall rule as a king, after having redeemed it as a priest—hence proceeds his glory—What is the cause of these great events? what but that most sacred and august convention, the *counsel of peace*? which was settled between them both; between the LORD JEHOVAH on the one hand, and the MAN whose name is the BRANCH on the other?"

"IN Psalm xl, the *conditions* of the covenant are circumstantially recorded; which were the incarnation and obedience of the eternal Son: "A body hast thou prepared me, Lo, I come to do thy will," &c.

* Hervey's Dialogues, Scotch edit. vol. ii. 328.

† Ibid. vol. i. 352.

"HERE

"HERE are the parties of the covenant, the conditions of the covenant, the performance of the covenant, and the reward *."

"BETWEEN the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, this, I apprehend, is the difference: By the former, man was indispensably bound to obey in his own person. By the latter, the obedience of his surety is accepted instead of his own†." "For which reason he is stiled by St. Paul, the second man, and the surety of a better covenant, our help being laid upon one that is so mighty, upon one that is so faithful, the covenant is said to be in all things well ordered, and sure‡."

DR. GILL, speaking of the covenant of grace, saith, "This was made with Christ from everlasting, and stands fast with him§." [So far the Doctor seems to agree with the orthodox, and to speak scripturally of the Covenant of Grace.]

"This Covenant is commonly represented as if it was only between the FATHER and the SON. ||."

"THE sure and everlasting covenant is made of God, with his Christ; and in him, and with respect to him, with his people, which is the substance of what learned divines say concerning the covenant‡." [Here he acknowledges, that his own representation of the covenant, which immediately follows, is not that which is commonly believed.]

* Hervey's Dialogues. vol. 1. p. 353. † Ibid. p. 354. ‡ Ibid. p. 355. § Gill's Body of Divinity, vol. 1. p. 84. || Ibid. p. 352. ‡ Ibid. Doctrine of the Trinity p. 68.

“ In the Covenant of Grace, all the three persons are manifestly concerned. The Father made the covenant ; the Son is become the surety, mediator, and messenger of it : and the Spirit of God stands by as a witness to it, and to see all the articles agreed upon between the Father and Son, performed on each side. The Father’s part in this covenant, was to fill it with all spiritual blessings—the Son’s part was to receive them all—and the Spirit’s part is to apply all *.”

○ ANOTHER learned divine expresses himself thus : “ Father, Son, and Spirit. These three exist in one JEHOVAH. They took those names, not to describe their manner of existing, but their manner of acting ; not what they are in themselves, but how they stand related to us in the œconomy of redemption. For the eternal Three entered into covenant before all worlds, and agreed to sustain covenant offices, and assume names descriptive of their offices.

“ FATHER is the title of that divine person who gave an innumerable company of sinners to his Son, upon condition that he would be manifested in the flesh, and would become their surety, to work out for them a righteousness in his life, and to make an atonement for them by his death, and then he would be his Father and their Father. A co-equal and co-eternal person accepted the condition, and covenanted to be made man, and to live and die for the many sons whom he was to bring to glory. Therefore he took the name of Son ; Son of God, Son of

* Gill’s Doctrine of the Trinity. p. 63, 64.

man. Another co-equal and co-eternal person covenanted to breathe life into them, and to be to them the spirit or breath of life, that they might be regenerated from a death in trespasses and sins, and be made the children of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. Therefore he is called throughout the scriptures, *the Spirit.*"

R E M A R K S.

1. THE differences of those great divines (and many more might have been mentioned) respecting the Covenant of Grace, is quite obvious. They seem not to agree, either as to the *number of persons* covenanting, or as to the *manner* of it. Dr. Gill's words on the occasion are very extraordinary; he says, "The Spirit of God stands by, as a witness to it, and to see all the articles agreed upon between the Father and Son performed on each side."

Is not this a gross and very unworthy insinuation of God and his Holy Spirit? Did God need any one to bind him to the performance of his promise and his oath? or is the Spirit another being distinct from God? how else can he be said to stand by as a witness; and that not to bind man, but God?

2. DO TH not the representation of the Covenant, as between *three* divine persons in the Godhead, *necessarily* convey to our minds the idea of three distinct beings, or gods? Were this the case, is it not strange that neither the prophets nor apostles should have so represented and declared it to us?

BUT

BUT those that deny the pre-existence of the human soul, of Christ, though they seem to hold a Trinity of persons in one divine essence; yet, in my opinion, they can never consistently hold any proper Covenant of Grace, concerning man before the world was; and therefore their account of it is made up of bare positive assertions without proof; and their attempts to explain it seem to me full of contradiction and confusion. Take as a specimen the following instance: "Though their nature and essence are but *one*, which is common to them all; and so their *will* but *one*; yet there are distinct *acts* of it, *peculiar* to each person, which appear in their covenanting with each other*," &c.

THIS author, for fear of dividing the essence, will not allow a *perfect* distinct *will* to either of the divine persons, but tells us, that there is *one will* common to three persons, and in that will there are *three* distinct *acts* or powers of acting, and that this, respecting covenant transactions, constitutes their personal distinctions. But distinct acts of *one* and the *same will* are no proof of a personal distinction at all, but rather the contrary; and thus he unawares seems to fall into *Sabellianism*: for if by distinct divine persons he means no more than distinct powers in one divine Being; and in operation distinct acts of *one* and the *same divine will*; no Unitarian will be offended with him.

MR. HERVEY's account, upon the whole, is, I conceive, most rational and scriptural; for JEHOVAH, and the *man*,

* Gill's Body of Divinity. vol. i. p. 353.

whose name is the *branch*, i. e. Christ Jesus, are certainly two distinct beings ; and capable of entering into covenant ; because they have not *numerically* one and the same will, but *two distinct wills* : and hence our Lord saith, " He came down from heaven, not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him," John vi. 38. They are also suitable and proper persons in the present case ; for it behoved *one* of them to obey and *suffer for men* : it was likewise necessary that this same person, who was to die for us, should be also supported by JEHOVAH the living God, who therefore promised to be with him, and to hold his hand, and to keep him, Isa. xlii. 1, 6. But all the above divines *seem* to agree in one thing ; viz. in this, That Christ's Godhead suffered : or that he suffered *as a divine person*. Their words, I think, express as much : What else is meant by " the death of God's everlasting Son ?" &c. and as another speaks, by " a co-eternal person covenanting to live and *die* for us ?" &c. whereby they evidently mean and intend, not a human, but a divine person. If it be said that by such expressions they only meant, that another nature, infinitely below the nature of the Son of God, but in union with him, suffered and died, then they do not seem to mean as they speak, nor is their language on the occasion agreeable to scripture, nor strictly true : but if they make use of words without ideas, or when taken in their common acceptation, have a tendency to persuade persons that Christ, as God, suffered and died ; are they not greatly to blame ? and do they not thereby degrade *Deity itself* ? and deny that any true Godhead belongs to the person of Christ ;

notwithstanding they, at other times, positively assert the contrary?

BUT we believe and maintain, as the scripture plainly speaks, that Christ the Son of God, did, in a true and proper sense, lay down his life for us, without ascribing weakness or sufferings to a divine person in the God-head; for we believe that the man Christ Jesus is the true and only begotten Son of God, who, as such, is the beginning of the creation of God; for whom God in the fulness of time prepared a human body, that being united to it, and made a complete man, he might, *as man*, suffer in the flesh for men; and so bring us unto God: for the Mediator between God and men is the man Christ Jesus, "who gave himself for our sins according to the will of God, and our Father. To whom be glory for ever. Amen."

SCRIPTURES MISINTERPRETED BY CERTAIN
LEARNED DIVINES,

I. "I, EVEN I, am JEHOVAH, and besides me there is no Saviour," Isa. xliii. II. "Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. iii. 18.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"JESUS CHRIST, then, is our Saviour: but unless he were God, even the LORD JEHOVAH, as well as man, he could not be a Saviour; because the Lord has declared, there is no Saviour besides himself. It is therefore rightly observed by the apostle, Phil. ii. 9. "That God, in dignifying the *man Christ* with the *name of JESUS*, hath given him a name *above every name*, even that of a Saviour, which

which is his *own name*, and such as can belong to no other*.”

“JESUS CHRIST is a *Saviour*, therefore he is JEHOVAH the Lord.”

“JESUS CHRIST is JEHOVAH, therefore he is the Saviour†.”

OBSERVATION.

1. THIS author's reasoning proceeds, as I conceive, on a palpable mistake, and is also a contradiction to itself. The prophet *Isaiab* testifies there is no Saviour but JEHOVAH. And the apostle *Peter* declares, that Jesus Christ is the Saviour; therefore he infers, that Christ must be JEHOVAH.

I WOULD only ask this author, If the Father is not JEHOVAH? and if so, which no christian, I presume, will deny, then God the Father is the Saviour; and consequently our author's argument falls to the ground; for it is built on this supposition—that Christ is meant *personally* by JEHOVAH, in *distinction* from the Father: and how doth he prove this? why because the *man Christ* is called the Saviour; for so the apostle evidently means. See Acts xiii. 23. He forgets that the FATHER was in the Son, saving the world *by* him. By JEHOVAH, then, in Isa. xliii. 11. I understand the Father; for it is certain, that HE *sent* his Son to save us—that HE *laid our iniquities upon him*—that he condemned them in him—and all the while that Christ was suffering, the FATHER upheld and

* Rev. Mr. Jones's Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, page 3.

† Ibid.

supported him. Therefore God the Father, in his Son, and together *with his Son*, saves mankind : and hence *each of them, in different respects*, is called the Saviour. But, according to our author's reasoning, it seems that Christ, as a divine person, is the Saviour, *exclusive* of the Father, which is absolutely false : but if the Father be *included*, then his remarks prove nothing : neither is what we say at all contrary to *Peter*, for the Father did not save us *without* the Son, but *by* him.

DOETH not this author likewise contradict himself ? for he allows that the *man Christ*, who, as such, is not JEHOVAH, is called the Saviour ; for he saith, that " God hath dignified the man Christ with the name *Jesus*," &c. If so, then the name Saviour belongs to Christ as man, and not as JEHOVAH ; for JEHOVAH cannot have that name given to him by another ; but Christ hath that name given to him ; consequently it belongs to him as man. And thus we make the prophet and apostle to agree together, when we understand *Peter* as speaking of the *man Christ* (" whom God hath raised to be a *Saviour* for us") and the prophet as speaking of God the Father, who provided Christ his Son, and who was in him reconciling us unto himself by him. Thus God and man united, is the glorious complex Saviour of the world : but if we speak of JEHOVAH as the Saviour, it is God the Father who sent his Son to save us ; and when we speak of the Saviour, as *suffering, meriting, and exalted to be a Saviour for us*, then it is not God the Father, but his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

2. " And

2. "And many of the children of *Israel* shall he turn to the *Lord their God* : and he shall go before HIM," &c. Luke i. 16, 17. "HE that cometh *after me* is mightier than I," &c. Matt. iii. 11.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"HENCE the Baptist is said to go before the *Lord God of the children of Israel* : but it is certain he went before Jesus Christ, the only person who is said to come *after* him ; therefore *Jesus Christ is the Lord God of the children of Israel*†."

OBSERVATION.

2. HERE again he makes the same mistake as before ; not considering that God the Father was in his Son Jesus Christ. Hence to go before Christ, the Son of God, was to go before God the Father also. He therefore confounds the persons of the Father and the Son together.

THAT the LORD GOD of *Israel* was the FATHER of Christ, is certain from John viii. 54. Acts iii. 13, &c. But our author, I conceive, contradicts the testimony of Christ, and his apostles ; and makes Christ also to be the Son of himself, which is impossible.

3. "They tempted and provoked the *most high God*," Psalm lxxviii. 56. "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of *them* also tempted," 1 Cor. x. 9.

† Mr. Jones on the Trinity, page 4.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"THESE texts do both relate to the same rebellious act of the *Israelites* in the wilderness. In the former of them, the person they *tempted* is called the *most high God* : in the latter, he is called *Christ* : therefore *Christ* is the *most high God*."

OBSERVATION.

3. THIS is just the same kind of reasoning as before; and tends to make the scripture full of confusion and contradiction.

CHRIST, as the name imports, was a person *anointed*, and *made a curse for sinners*; but the *most high God* was not anointed, but the *anointer* : HE it was that anointed his Son *Jesus*, who is called *Christ*, because he was anointed by him. Moreover, it was God the Father that sent his Son *Jesus Christ* before the church, to lead them, &c. but he did not send him alone, for the *Father*, by his infinite Godhead, was ever *in him*, and *went with him*, and spoke by him : "I am not alone, saith *Christ*, because the Father is with me," John xvi. 32. They, therefore, that tempted *CHRIST*, *tempted GOD in him*; just as he that *hateth the SON*, *hateth the FATHER also*, John xv. 23.

4. "GOD was in *Christ* reconciling the world unto himself," 2 Cor. v. 19.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"IT is allowed on all hands, that the *world* was recovered by *Jesus Christ*, to the *one only, great, and supreme God*."

God. But this very *same* God (for the word is but *once* used in the whole sentence) was *in* Christ; manifest *in* the flesh, and *reconciling the world unto himself*."

"THE text considers God as *agent*, and *patient* at the same time, and upon the same occasion; as the *reconciler* of the world, in the person of the SON, and the object to whom the reconciliation is made in the person of the Father; yet there is but one word (God) to express them *both*; so that the word GOD, though of *singular* number, is of *plural* comprehension*."

OBSERVATION.

4. THE author's reasoning here is very surprizing! He indeed distinguishes Jesus Christ, in whom God was, from the one great supreme God that was in him; had he always done this, he would have avoided the above absurdities: but then he says, that this *one* God was both *agent* and *patient*. Surely he doth not mean that the *Deity* suffered, and so *made satisfaction to himself*. The expression, I think, seems to imply as much; but he is *professedly* no *Sabellian*, and therefore this cannot be his meaning—but the scheme he labors to establish will, I conceive, be always so understood.

HE reckons *that* God, who was in Christ, to be *two* divine persons, or gods; one the *AGENT* *reconciling*, and the other the *OBJECT* to whom the reconciliation is made: But if this be really the case, how is the other divine person reconciled? Certainly the *whole* of Deity and every person *in* TRUE DEITY, is equally offended.

† Mr. Jones on the Trinity, page 9.

And

And to deny reconciliation to a divine person, is in effect to deny his Deity ; besides, reconciliation to God for the sins of men is not made without suffering ; but God cannot suffer : therefore reconciliation, *in that sense*, was not made by a divine person at all.

It is unreasonable to suppose, that the *singular* word *God* is of *plural comprehension*, and we have only the author's bare word for it ; but we are satisfied to the contrary, for the apostle speaks of God all along in the singular number, as of one, and not of two or three.

His grand error, I conceive, is this—he seems entirely to neglect CHRIST, by whom the reconciliation was made. But the text says expressly, not that God, in *two* persons, reconciled the world each to other ; but that *God*, plainly meaning *one*, even the Father, was *in* Christ, and *reconciled* the world unto himself by Jesus Christ.

5. “ THEN cometh the end, when HE shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the FATHER,” 1 Cor. xv. 24. “ He [Jesus] shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end,” Luke i. 53.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

“ THIS of St. Luke, being a contradiction in terms to that of the apostle, shews the former to be spoken *only* of Christ's humanity ; as the latter relates *only* to his divinity. As *man*, he received a kingdom ; which again as *man*, he shall deliver up : but there is a kingdom pertaining to him, which shall have *no end*. And this cannot be true, unless
he

he is a *person* in that God, who, after the humanity has delivered up the kingdom, shall be *all in all*†.

OBSERVATION

5. HERE he makes even the apostle to reason absurdly; as if he should say, that Christ as man delivered up the kingdom to himself as God. Doth not our author also contradict the scripture, which saith expressly, that the person who delivers up the kingdom, and becomes subject, is the Son? and that the person to whom he delivers it up is *not himself*, but *God the Father*. The passage in Luke manifestly relates, not to a divine person, but to the man Christ; for it is a person born of the virgin, who was to have the throne of *David*, and to reign over the house of *Jacob*; and this was God's anointed King, the man Christ Jesus. The words, "He shall reign for ever," &c. plainly mean, that the kingdom shall be established in his hands, and shall not be transferred to others, as that of his types, the kings of *Israel* was; and in the same sense he is said to be a priest for ever: therefore it only means, that his kingdom should not end until it terminated in the destruction of all his and his church's enemies. This text is well explained by Psalm cx. 1. Dan. ii. 44. and chap. vii. 14. Even the saints are said to reign for ever and ever, Rev. xxii. 5. But this doth not make them divine persons. The contradiction then must rest with our author, and not between *St. Luke* and the apostle.

† Mr. Jones on the Trinity, p. 15.

6. "To us there is but *one* God the FATHER," 1 Cor. viii. 6. If we compare this with that expression of St. Thomas, John xx. 28. "MY LORD and MY GOD," we have the following argument.

MR. JONES'S REMARK.

"To us there is but *one* God the FATHER : But to us JESUS CHRIST is GOD. Therefore the gospel has either preached *two* gods to us, one distinct from the other : or, that *one* GOD the FATHER, is here the name of a *nature*, under which Christ himself, as God, is also comprehended *."

OBSERVATION.

6. THE following texts make the apostle's meaning quite clear and plain : "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," John xiv. 9. "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me," John xii. 44. Therefore Thomas saw the Father in the Son, and he confessed, and believed on both ; when he said, "My Lord and my God."

THE plain sense of these scriptures compared, and not the author's reasoning, clears the gospel from the charge of *Polytheism*. That Father is a personal name of relation, and not a name of nature, is manifest from the text itself, see 1 Cor. viii. 6. The scripture also testifies, that the living God is the Father of Christ : but our author, I think, by his manner of handling

* Mr. Jones on the Trinity, p. 23.

these texts, doth expressly contradict the apostle *Paul's* testimony of God, and also make the Son to be himself the Father.

7. "THE HEAD of CHRIST is GOD," 1 Cor. xi. 3.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"THE name of Christ doth here stand, as in other places out of number, for the man Christ; otherwise it must follow, that as Christ is God, God is the head of himself; which is a contradiction: or that one God is the head of another God; which also is a contradiction †."

OBSERVATION.

7. His reasoning here is just and scriptural; but for want of attending to this distinction all along, he hath run into the contradictions already mentioned.

He rightly acknowledges that the name CHRIST stands here, "as in *other places out of number*, for the man Christ;" and to say the truth, in my opinion, it *always stands for the man Christ*, and never means any other. If any one think otherwise, I should be obliged to him to tell me where it does not? And further, the man Christ always means the Son of God, *in his whole proper person*, as begotten of the Father, and distinct from him, and as anointed by him, and appointed to the office of Mediator.

† Mr. Jones on the Trinity, p. 23.

IF I am mistaken, I will thank the person that from scripture shall prove to me the contrary.

8, "UNTO *him* that is able to *present* you faultless before the presence of his glory, to the *only wise God* our Saviour," Jude 25. "That *HE* [Christ] might present it to *HIMSELF* a glorious church," &c. Eph. v. 27.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"It is the *only wise God* who is able to *present* us before the presence of his glory; but *Christ* is to *present* us as members of the church in glory to himself: therefore he is the *only wise God*. *Μονος Θεος*, the *only God*, is not God in *one person*, but the *unity of the Trinity*."

OBSERVATION.

8. HERE are strange and positive assertions! but, in my opinion, they are all built on the same kind of fallacious arguments as the former. These passages are easily understood by another scripture, where it is said, that Christ shall present us to God, and that together with himself, saying, "Behold, I and the children which thou hast given me," Heb. ii. 13. for Christ having cleansed and purged his people, making them a meet bride for himself, is described as presenting us to himself, which he doth: but he also, at last, presents us with himself to the Father, who is the only wise God our Saviour. And as God, *in* and *by* Christ, redeemed, so doth he sanctify and present, us to himself, *in* and *by* Christ. The text in Jude is also
more

more fully explained by Heb. ii. 10, 11, and Eph. iii. 20, 21.

THUS Christ, as man, is the head and bridegroom of the church; and God the Father is the head and husband of Christ, who, together with the church, is the living temple, and habitation of God, thro' the Spirit, chap. ii 22.

Of the HOLY SPIRIT.

I. "AND hereby we know that HE abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given us," 1 John iv. 24.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"THE apostle's reasoning is this: "The Spirit abideth in us, and hereby we know that he [God] abideth in us," but unless the Spirit be a *person* in the unity of God, the conclusion is manifestly false †."

OBSERVATION.

1. THIS is a bold assertion, to say that the apostle's conclusion is false, unless the Spirit be a *person*, &c. Why may not God dwell in us by his Spirit, without the Spirit's being another person in distinction from God? There is nothing in reason or scripture to forbid it, that I know of, but the reverse; for it seems to me most proper to believe, that *God dwells in us by his Spirit*, because his Spirit is *not another person*: for if it was, it would not be easy to prove that one divine person dwelt in us, because we had received another. If the Spirit of

† Mr. Jones on the Trinity, p. 38.

God was not *essential* to his being, then indeed the conclusion, I conceive, would not follow; but if the Spirit is, as we believe, of his own essential nature and deity, then, where the Spirit is, God the Father whose Spirit he is, is there also.

2. "FOR what man knoweth the things of a man, save the *spirit* of man which is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man [*videlicet*] none, but the Spirit of God,"
1 Cor. ii. 11.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"THE Spirit of a *man* knows the things of a man for *this* reason, because it is *in him*: for the *same* reason the Spirit of God knows the things of God, because it is *in the Godhead*; than which nothing further need be desired to prove the *co-essentiality* of the *Holy Ghost*. If you take it otherwise, there can be no parallel between the two cases: for how strange would it be to say—The human *spirit* knows the things of a man, because it is *in him*: EVEN SO, the divine Spirit knows the things of GOD, because it is *out of him*. This text brings the matter to a short issue."

"THE church affirms the Spirit to be *in* God, as a *person* of the same divine nature:—the *Arians* deny it, and will understand him to be *out of* God; not a person of the divine nature, but one inferior to, and distinct from it*."

* Mr. Jones on the Trinity, Page 40.

OBSERVATION.

2. THE *Arian* error is, I conceive, manifest ; and is not theirs also, who make the *Spirit of God* another person distinct from God ? for how strange would it be to say, that the Spirit of God, because he knows the things of God, is another person : but the spirit of man, which knows the things of man, is not another person ? Is not the apostle's reasoning here from analogy, between the Spirit of God *knowing* the things of God, and the spirit of man *knowing* the things of man, equally applicable to God and his Spirit, and to a man and his spirit *with respect to personality* ? for God made man in his own image.

IF, therefore, a man and his spirit, are not two persons, it seems reasonable from hence to infer, that God and his Spirit are not two persons, but one only.

3. "THE SPIRIT OF GOD," Matt. iii. 16.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"THE Spirit, say they, is not God ; because he is only the Spirit of God : but so likewise the *human spirit*, (whence the apostle hath taught us to borrow an idea of the divine) is the spirit of a man ; yet was it ever pretended, that the *Spirit*, for this reason, is *one* being, and the *man* another ? No, certainly : and the same must be true of *God*, and the Spirit of God ; as far as the being of the *same man*, who is *one* person, can be an image of the *same God*, who is *three* persons. But there is the plainest

plainest testimony of scripture, that the Spirit, though said to be the Spirit of JEHOVAH, is also called by the express name of JEHOVAH himself. For it is written, Judg. xv. 14. that the Spirit of JEHOVAH came upon Sampson; yet at chap. xvi. 20. it is said, that JEHOVAH himself DEPARTED from HIM.

"UNTIL it can be shewn, then, that the person who came upon him was one, and the person who departed from him was another; it is undeniable that the Spirit, though said to be OF JEHOVAH, is strictly and properly JEHOVAH HIMSELF†."

OBSERVATION.

3. IT is allowed that no man can rationally suppose the Spirit of a man to be one being, and the man himself to be another: and it is equally true, that the Spirit of a man is not another person: and is it not as reasonable to suppose the same must be true of God, and the Spirit of God? for if the Spirit of man, in any of its acts, as searching and knowing his own thoughts and purposes, doth resemble God's Spirit, in searching and knowing his own thoughts and purposes, may we not equally suppose that God and his Spirit is but one person, as that a man and his spirit is but one person? The scripture never says (though some men have supposed it) that God is three persons. And our author plainly, I think, opposes himself in this matter, from Judg. xv. 14. and chap. xvi. 20. for he there makes JEHOVAH and his Spirit to be one and the

† Mr. Jones on the Trinity, p. 46.

same person ; and says it is undeniable that the Spirit, though said to be OF JEHOVAH, is strictly and properly JEHOVAH himself.

THUS these Gentlemen, who seem sometimes warmly to oppose us, either unwittingly, or of design, leave their common beaten tract, and walk with us in the narrow path of scripture, reason, and truth.

4. "THE Spirit itself maketh intercession for us," Rom. viii. 26.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"God, as it is imagined, cannot *intercede* with himself. But it is a matter of fact that he has actually done this ; therefore it is wicked and false to say, that he *cannot* ; for God *reconciled* the world to HIMSELF, and it was done by intercession §."

OBSERVATION.

4. THIS whole sentence speaks, I conceive, the very language of *Sabellius* ; but it is no wonder if wise and good men are sometimes confused, when writing on such a deep point of divinity, and especially in attempting to make the mouth of error speak the language of truth. But I do not like this *Sabellian* tenet, because it subverts the doctrine of Christ's atonement. Where doth the scripture say that God made intercession to himself ? The scripture cited proves the contrary, but he left that part

§ Mr. Jones on the Trinity. p. 47.

out : for God reconciled us to himself, by *another*, even *Christ* ; and he it is that makes intercession to God, and *with* God, for us ; it is not God that intercedes to himself : and when the Spirit makes intercession, it is Christ's Spirit in us ; and because he *stirs us up* to pray for ourselves, &c. therefore *he* is said to make intercession in us ; in the same manner as when he teaches and enables us to cry, *Abba Father*, the spirit is said to cry, *Abba Father*, this is plain from Rom. viii. 15. compared with Gal. iv. 6. but it is Christ alone, *personally* considered, that is our *advocate* with the Father : therefore when his Spirit makes intercession in us, or excites us to pray, he leads us to Christ, that he may present our prayers, and intercede for us unto God.

TRINITY IN UNITY,

I. "THE same LORD over all, is rich unto all that call upon him," Rom. x. 12. "A Saviour, which is Christ the LORD," Luke ii. 11. "For who hath known the mind of the LORD, or who hath been his counsellor?" Rom. xi. 34.

MR. JONES'S REMARKS.

"WHICH Lord, as we learn from the prophet whence this is quoted, is the *Spirit* ; for it is written, Isa. xl. 13. "Who hath directed the SPIRIT of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him?" That the person of the Spirit is the Lord, is also plain from 2 Cor. iii. 18. "Now the Lord is that Spirit," &c. which is all along
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to be understood of the *personal Spirit*, because the apostle begins expressly with *that* at the third verse §."

OBSERVATION.

1. THE citation out of *Luke* is plainly spoken of the man Christ, who was born of the virgin, and was *made* both Lord and Christ; and this cannot mean a divine person: consequently the text is not pertinent to the case in hand—it speaks nothing of that which it is brought to prove. His own argument also from *Judges*, above noticed, overturns what he here saith of the Spirit of the Lord: for if the Lord himself is to be meant in Rom. xi. 34. then it doth not prove, that the Spirit of the Lord means any other person, but the Lord himself. What is cited from 2 Cor. iii. 18. is, I think, evidently wrong; for the person there spoken of is *Christ*, who is made a quickening Spirit, and is, as such, *the Lord the Spirit*.

TEXTS of SCRIPTURE cited by Mr. JONES in proof of the Doctrine are such as these:

2. "WHO hath known the MIND of the LORD?"
1 Cor. ii. 16. "We have the MIND of CHRIST."
"HE that searcheth the hearts, knoweth what is the MIND of the SPIRIT ||," Rom. viii. 27.

OBSERVATION.

2. THE *mind* of Christ plainly, I think, means the mind of the man Christ, which the saints certainly have.

§ Mr. Jones on the Trinity. p. 70.

|| Ibid. p. 72.

And the *mind* of the Spirit means, I conceive, that rational *breathing*, and *holy desire* after God, which the Spirit of Christ raises in them; and it is called the *mind* of the Spirit, because he is the *author* of those holy desires in us. Thus the apostle's speaking under the divine influences of the Spirit, is called the Spirit's speaking: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you."

3. OTHER texts cited by Mr. Jones, in order to prove a trinity of divine co-equal persons, &c. are,

"THE FATHER raiseth up the dead, and QUICKENETH them: even so the Son QUICKENETH whom he will," John v. 21.

"IT is the SPIRIT that QUICKENETH *," John vi. 63.

OBSERVATION.

3. THE Son declares, that the "*Father* hath given him to *have life in himself*;" and the apostle testifies, *he is made a quickening Spirit*: and the Spirit of God, whereby he quickeneth all things, is included in his own divine person; so that these texts, which are strangely collected from different places, prove nothing at all of a Trinity of divine co-equal persons in the Godhead.

EXTRACTS from Dr. GILL on the TRINITY;
with REMARKS.

On JOHN xvii. 3. he saith,

1. "Now had Jesus Christ, by this text, stood excluded from the only true God, he would never have joined himself

* Mr. Jones on the Trinity, p. 75.

self with him ; besides, eternal life is made as much to depend upon knowing Jesus Christ, as upon knowing the only true God † .”

REMARK.

JOHN xvii. 3.

1. IT is manifest that Christ in this text *distinguishes* himself from the only true God ; yet it was necessary that he should here join himself with God, for he is the Mediator between God and men, and *there is no coming to God but by him*. Our eternal life also must needs depend upon knowing the Son together with the Father, *because God hath given to us eternal life, not out of his Son, but in him*.

THIS text, therefore, only proves, that the man Christ Jesus is the *alone Mediator* between God and men, and that *God hath given to us eternal life, in his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*.

DR. GILL.

1 COR. viii. 5, 6.

2. “THE *one GOD* the FATHER here stands opposed to the *Polytheism* of the *Gentiles*, to them that are called gods. Besides, if Jesus Christ stands excluded from this one God the Father, then by the same rule of interpretation, God the Father must stand excluded from the one Lord ||,” &c.

† Gill on the Trinity, p. 22.

|| Ibid. p. 23.

REMARK.

I COR. viii. 5, 6.

2. GOD the FATHER is not only here *opposed* to all idols ; but he is likewise evidently *distinguished* from Christ his Son, who is mentioned in the very next verse in distinction from him : yet the Father is not excluded from being LORD, understanding thereby *absolute* rule and *dominion* ; for every greater includes the less : but if we consider Christ as set up, and *made LORD* by the Father ; which the scripture declares he is, then the Father (in that sense) is not *included* in the word LORD, for he is not made LORD by any. The Son receives all from the Father, both his being, authority, and power ; but the Father receives his from none.

DR. GILL.

3. "NOR is Christ excluded from the one God in 1 Tim. ii. 5. It is true Christ is spoken of in his human nature as man ; yet there are some things said of him, which prove him to be God. Was he not God, he could not be a Mediator between God and men *."

REMARK.

3. CHRIST, as man, is Mediator, as the text witnesseth, and not as God. Certainly he that is a Mediator between God and men must, in his own proper person, be distin-

* Gill on the Trinity, p. 24.

guished

guished from *both parties*; and therefore also he was sent of God, and anointed with the Holy Ghost, which, as man, he was capable of, but not as God. To say that Christ could not be a Mediator, &c. was he not God, is not only a contradiction to the plain text, but, as, I humbly conceive, a manifest absurdity. It is as much as to say, that Christ as man could not obey the law, and suffer death for the guilty: and that God the Father could not appoint him to the office, and support him in the execution of it.

I CONCEIVE, therefore, that the Doctor's reasoning and conclusion from these scriptures, is neither just nor true.

Dr. GILL's farther OBSERVATIONS on the WORD
ALEIM, or ELOHIM.

"1. THIS word is sometimes in construction with a verb plural, of which there are several instances, as Gen. xx. 13. "And it came to pass, when the gods caused me to wander," &c. and so Gen. xxxv. 7. "And he [*Jacob*] built there an altar, and called the place *El-bethel*, because there the *gods* appeared to him," Gen. xvi. 27. and once more in Sam. vii. 23. "And what one nation in the earth is like thy people, even like *Israel*; whom the *gods* went to redeem for a people unto himself." Thus the Dr. translates these texts of scripture.

He goes on: "Now, as one well observes, that however the construction of a noun plural with a verb singular, may render it doubtful to some, whether these words express a plurality, or no; yet certainly there can be no doubt in those places where a verb or adjective plural are joined with

with the word ALEIM. *The plurality here expressed cannot be a plurality of gods, &c. †.*"

"IT is sometimes in construction with adjectives and participles plural, as Deut. iv. 7. and v. 26. and in other places, where mention is made of the living God, it is expressed in the plural, "The living gods," as in 1 Sam. vii. 26, 36. Gen. xxxiii. 36. Jer. x. 10. Joshua xxiv. 19. Prov. xxx. 3. Psalm lviii. 11 §."

"I AM sensible the word is used of a single person in the Deity, in Psalm xlv. 6, 7. and it need not be wondered at, that a name that is common to all the three divine persons should be appropriated to one of them, especially when it is considered that each divine person possesses the whole essence and nature common to all three."

"I KNOW it is also given to *Moses*,—when he represented, and stood in the room and stead of the *triune* God †. See Job. xxxv. 10. Psalm cxlix. Eccles. xii. 1. Isa. liv. 5 ||." Thus far this great divine.

R E M A R K S.

1. THIS word ALEIM (which is confessedly of a plural termination) is said, by our author, to have a *plural sense* or meaning, i. e. as the Doctor again and again translates it, not God, but *gods*: he contends also for *this* sense of the word; but doth he not contradict himself, page 28. where he saith, "The plurality here expressed cannot be a

† Gill on the Trinity, p. 27, 28. § Ibid. p. 28, 29. || Ibid. 29, 30.

plurality of *gods*?" What can such authors mean by speaking after this manner? do they not rather confound than instruct their readers? for after they have told us that the original word means in the plural *gods*, and have themselves so rendered it in divers places; yet they at last tell us, *that it cannot mean a plurality of gods*: and thus happily, for the sake of truth, they presently deny what a little before they confidently affirmed.

2. If the word in the singular doth mean God, and the plural is to be understood properly as meaning more than one, then it certainly means; and ought ever to be rendered *gods*; but if, when used in a plural form (for the divine being) it doth not mean a *plurality of gods*, then it must be understood as an *absolute singular*, and is used plurally by way of eminence, for the one living and true God.

3. It is allowed that "when this noun is used with a verb singular, it may be doubtful to some, whether it is to be understood of plural comprehension; but it is said, there can be no doubt in those places where a verb or adjective plural are joined with it:" But is it not more than doubtful, whether it have a *plural meaning*, if we consider that it is constructed with a *verb singular*, and *pronouns singular*, much oftener than with a verb plural, and that, as I suppose, *above a hundred to one*?

Now which is the most rational, to interpret a *thousand* plain and express texts, by *half a score* of difficult passages; or *those* by *them*?

4. It is admitted that the word is used for a *single person*, for which this reason is given by our author, viz. "be-

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cause

cause each divine person possesses the whole essence." Should he not rather have said, because each divine person includes the other divine persons?

BUT if a name, expressive of a plurality, may be given to *one* divine person, because he possesses the whole divine essence, *may not then the whole divine essence, as subsisting in one single person, be expressed by a noun or name plural?* For the same reason it may be given to *Moses*, not as representing *three* divine persons, or, as the Doctor speaks, *a triune God*; but as representing *one* only; and it is most reasonable to believe, that *Moses* was a type of CHRIST, and represented him who is called ALEIM, because he is God's immediate representative, and most perfect image, &c.

Dr. GILL likewise says,

I. "THERE is one, who is the true JEHOVAH, that sends, and another distinct from him, who is also the true JEHOVAH, who is sent by him: then there must be more than one who is JEHOVAH; and so consequently there must be a plurality in the Deity §."

REMARK.

I. "Do not the Doctor's words seem to declare that there are more JEHOVAHS than one? and is not this a direct contradiction to scripture, which saith, "I am JEHOVAH, and there is none else?" Isa. xlv. 5, 6. And is not this also the consequence which he draws from his own propo-

§ Dr. Gill on the Trinity, p. 48.

sition? "And so there must be a plurality in the Deity." Of what? Of JEHOVAHS, which is the plurality he had before asserted. Can this be reconciled with Deut. iv. 6.

Dr. GILL in another place speaks thus:

2. "NOR is this name (JEHOVAH) given to her (the church) in Ezek. xlviii. 35. absolutely, but in composition, or with addition; and is only symbolical of JEHOVAH's presence being with her.—The same may be said of mount *Moriah*, and the altars, &c.—Nor are priests and judges called JEHOVAH in Deut. xix. 17. for JEHOVAH is not to be explained by them; he is distinguished from them. And though he is joined with them; yet this only designs his presence in judiciary affairs †," &c.

R E M A R K.

2. THE DOCTOR allows that the name JEHOVAH is given to the church, "not absolutely, but in composition." In this we agree: he admits also, that this divine name is given to the priests and judges, for so he seems to understand Deut. xix. 17. and that when it is so, JEHOVAH is not to be explained by them, but is distinguished from them, though he is joined with them; this is also just and true. Now for the same reason we say, that in a more eminent manner, and with much greater propriety, the name JEHOVAH is given to Christ, even to the man Christ Jesus, who, as such, is the great high priest over the house of

† Dr. Gill on the Trinity. p. 126.

God, and the appointed judge of quick and dead, and is also constituted the head of the whole church ; *therefore* JEHOVAH, *which dwelleth in Christ, may well join his name with him* : nor do I ever find that the name JEHOVAH is given to Christ, but *in composition*, or with *addition* ; and never *absolutely*, as to a person distinct from the Father (let any one shew me the contrary if he can) consequently JEHOVAH, though truly joined with Christ, is not to be *explained by him*, but is *distinguished from him*.

ON Isa. xlii. 1. "Behold my servant whom I uphold," &c. the pious *Bishop* Beveridge speaks thus : "Here JEHOVAH the LORD is speaking of Christ his servant ; the first person of the second, and saith he will put his Spirit, to wit, the third person, upon him †."

R E M A R K.

FROM the worthy prelate's exposition of this text it is sufficiently plain, that by the second person he could not understand a proper *divine person* capable of supporting himself in the work of man's redemption, and that he looked upon the Father to be greater than the Son ; and in short, that his ideas of the divine persons were both gross and low : if otherwise, how could he speak of one divine person being put upon another ? &c. but those expressions are all of them both just and proper, according to the plain sense of the text, if we understand by JEHOVAH's servant, not JEHOVAH himself, but his Son, the man Christ Jesus ; and by the Spirit, not another person distinct from JEHOVAH, but his own essential Spirit.

§ Beveridge on the 39 Articles, 3d. Edit, p. 46.

C H A P. XII.

On the GODHEAD of CHRIST.

BY Christ, we always mean that person who was anointed of God, and sent by him to be the Saviour of the world, who also died and rose again : This person we firmly believe was begotten of God, and had a being with JEHOVAH, before any creature was made ; and that he ever was in personal union with God.—The moment he existed, he existed in God.

CHRISTIANS of every name professedly believe and universally agree in this—that there is but one living and true God ; therefore they who hold that the man Christ Jesus was properly and personally united to the living God, believe the Godhead of Christ ; and they that deny this, deny his proper Godhead. Now we firmly believe,

I. THAT Christ is perfectly united to the *whole Godhead* as personally subsisting in the divine nature, and that all the fulness of the Godhead dwells in him : therefore we deny

deny not, but believe the Godhead of Christ. We believe,

2. THAT Christ is in union with God the Father, of whose Deity and Godhead there is no doubt. Now, if we hold that Christ was united to the Father's Godhead, it cannot be said with truth, that we deny the Godhead of Christ, for the Father's Godhead is *true* Godhead. We believe,

3. THAT there is no Godhead but the Father's; and if so, whoever doth not believe and hold the Godhead of the Father to be Christ's Godhead, denies him to have any true Godhead at all.

Is not Christ the *Son* of the LIVING GOD? and is not the LIVING GOD, the God and Father of Christ? But God cannot be the God and Father of himself; therefore it follows, that the Godhead of him, who is the God and Father of Christ; is Christ's Godhead: but this cannot be applied to any other man, because Christ alone is in *personal union* with God. As then the scripture doth often and expressly declare, that God the Father, is the God and Father of Christ, the Godhead of the Father must of necessity be the Godhead of Christ; for there are not many gods, but one only. Again,

4. THAT divine person to whom the man Christ was united, who sent him into the world; promised him help; to whom he prayed; by whom he was constantly supported; who spake *in* him, and wrought miracles *by* him, is the DEITY of Christ; but this was GOD the FATHER: therefore the Godhead of the Father is the Godhead of Christ. On the contrary, they who ascribe a Deity to Christ,

Christ, that did not fill him with divine wisdom and power; support him in the days of his flesh, and work miracles by him; deny his Deity to be supreme; but this all strict Trinitarians seem to do: for they say, the man Christ was united to a divine person, that is not God the Father; but the scripture witnesseth, that God the Father put his Spirit upon him, and constantly dwelt in, and wrought the divine works that were done by him; therefore they deny the true Deity of Christ.

AGAIN: That person who needs and receives help from another, is not self-sufficient and omnipotent; but the divine person which is ascribed to Christ by the *Trinitarian hypothesis*, did both need and receive help from another, even from God the Father; therefore the Deity which they ascribe to Christ is of the *Arian* kind, subordinate and dependent. For if another divine person, that is not God the Father, had been united to the man Christ Jesus, would it not necessarily follow, that this same divine person, and not the Father, should have wrought his divine works; and that he would not have ascribed his works *personally* to the Father, nor could he have been anointed with the Spirit of the Father; but the contrary of all this is manifest from scripture, which testifies, that the Father did the works, and put his Spirit upon him; and therefore the Son himself declares, *that he could of his ownself do nothing; but that he lived by the Father, and received all things from the Father.*

LET us inquire a little more particularly who that divine person was that the scripture saith, "dwelt in, and was united to the man Christ Jesus." Is he called

God

God the Word, or God the Son? Never; not once in all the bible: Doth he say that the *Word*, or the *Son*, was in him, doing the works which he wrought? No such thing: he never once speaks after that manner. Who then is the divine person that was manifested and dwelt in him, and did the divine works that were wrought by him? Christ himself testifies that it was God the Father. "I do nothing, saith he, of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things," John viii. 28. "The *Father* which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak," John xii. 49. "The words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me, *he* doth the works," John xiv. 10. "The words which you hear are not mine, but the Father's who sent me," ver. 24. "If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I," ver. 28. "If I had not done among them the works which no other *man* did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father," John xv. 24. "God, in these last days, hath spoken to us *by* his Son," Heb. i. 2. "Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was *with him*," Acts x. 38.

CAN a testimony be more full, or any words be more plain and express than these? Do they not prove beyond all contradiction; that God the Father is that divine person who was in Christ, *speaking* and *acting* in and by his Son, when he was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and consequently, that all the fulness of the Godhead, which

was

was then manifested, and now dwells in Christ bodily, is the fulness of the Father's Godhead, and of no other person whatever.

IF then there is no other divine person said to be in Christ but the Father, and the works of Christ are always ascribed to him, and to power received from him; then the Father's Godhead is certainly the Godhead of Christ: And if the Father is a relative personal character, and is but one person; then God is but one person; and this is that God who was *in* Christ reconciling the world unto himself.

ON THE RIGHT OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

THE supreme and right object of divine worship is JEHOVAH, the only living and true God; who as in essence, so in person, is but one. And whereas he can only be known and approached in Christ Jesus the Mediator, so he can only be served and worshipped in and by him.

I KNOW it is said by many, that the right object of divine worship is not God in *one person*, as dwelling in Christ; but God as existing in three persons. To this I answer,

I. THE scriptures never, that I can find, so speak, nor represent him to us. But if, as some assert, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are *three co-essential and co-equal persons* in ONE DIVINE NATURE; is it not highly reasonable to suppose, that the Son would have been called, GOD the SON; and the Holy Ghost, GOD the SPIRIT; and that as often, and as plainly as the Father is called GOD the FATHER; lest we should be mistaken, and err in our ideas concerning the right object of worship? But is it

not notorious, that though for reasons already mentioned, Christ is sometimes called God, and Deity is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; yet we never read of *God the Son*, nor of *God the Holy Ghost*, in all the scriptures; but we constantly read of *God the Father*: and this expression, *God the Father*, doth, I conceive, signify, that the Father is ABSOLUTELY GOD in his own person, and that *exclusive* of all other; and therefore we never find it used of any one, besides him, because no other is *properly* and *personally* the living and true God, but the Father only.

2. If the right object of worship be *three* distinct, divine, co-equal persons, there must be *three objects* in one essence, and not *one* object only; for the object of our ideas is a *person*, an intelligent being, distinctly subsisting; and not *bare essence*, or nature abstracted from its *personal mode* of subsistence; for we have no idea of the *essence* of any thing, but as existing in some mode or form, or as a person subsisting; therefore, as many persons as there are conceived to be in the divine nature, so many objects there are of divine worship. If then there be *three persons*, there be *three objects* of divine worship, and will, as such, remain so in our ideas for ever: but we have but one proper object of divine worship revealed to us in scripture; therefore there is but one person in the divine nature.

3. If we come to God, as God, in a right and proper manner, we must come to him as he personally subsists in his *whole* divine essence; but we come to him as to one person, even to God the Father, therefore the Godhead is but one in person.

If

If it be said, that the Father is one, and there are two other co-equal persons, which, together with the Father, are the one JEHOVAH; it then follows, that when we come to the Father, we do not come to the one JEHOVAH; because it is said there are two other persons that are essential to the being of JEHOVAH: for I suppose it will not be denied, that there is but one JEHOVAH. Consequently, as God the Father is JEHOVAH, and is but one person, and there is but one JEHOVAH, the object of our worship is but one.

4. If we come to *one divine person* by another co-equal *divine person*, who is supposed to be the Mediator, we then come to an absolute God. If it be said, the *second* divine person was united to the human nature, and therefore we do not come to an absolute God; I answer, He that is the Mediator is a person; therefore that which constitutes his person is properly the Mediator, notwithstanding his union with the human nature; and if the Deity of Christ constitutes his proper person as such, which the *Trinitarians* constantly assert: for they say *as man he is no person*; then as God he is Mediator; and the consequence follows: but if his human nature constitutes his person as Mediator, which we firmly believe, then as man he is Mediator; and consequently when we come to the Father by him, we come to God as to one divine person, by his Son Jesus Christ.

5. If the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is not many persons, but one only, and the Father of Christ is the true object of divine worship, then the object of divine worship is but one person; and this I prove from the fol-

lowing scriptures:—"The Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 23, 24. "I bow my knees unto the *Father* of our Lord Jesus Christ," Eph. iii. 14. "I thank thee, *O Father*, Lord of heaven and earth," Mat. xi. 25. "No man cometh unto the *Father* but by me," John xiv. 6. "He ever liveth to make intercession for them that come to *God* by him," Heb. vii. 25. "Who hath made us kings and priests unto *God*, and his Father," Rev. i. 6. "He shall deliver up the kingdom to *God*, even the *Father* : and then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that *God* may be all in all," 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

THESE are but a few of the scriptures which I could have cited on this occasion : but from hence, I conceive, it is sufficiently plain, that if the Father is but one person, then God, the right object of worship, is but one person. Consequently they who make *two other objects* have been misled, and are in error. And I firmly believe, and doubt not, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is the only living and true God, and that there is no other besides him.

BUT as some persons speak much of an absolute God, and perhaps *too rashly*, without due consideration, hardly knowing what they say, and whereof they affirm ; it may be of use to some weak minds to shew what is meant by an ABSOLUTE GOD.

NOW an *absolute* GOD, is DEITY, *subsisting in his pure essence* ; and it neither means more nor less : if he be conceived

ceived of as subsisting in *three* persons, he is as truly and properly an absolute God, as when he is conceived and spoken of as subsisting in *one* person only; for the number of persons in the Godhead, whether more or less, doth not at all alter the case. It is just the same in *this respect* whether JEHOVAH subsist in one, or in three persons. They therefore who worship a God in three persons, do as truly and properly worship an absolute God, as they who worship God in one person only; and perhaps they are more justly chargeable with it: for if one of the divine persons, as they suppose, is the Mediator, whoso by that divine person cometh to another, doth undoubtedly worship an absolute God: for if the Mediator, by whom we come to God, be, as to his person, of his *essential Deity*, we have then only to do with an absolute God: and they who do not conceive of a Mediator *distinct* from God and of a *different nature* likewise, as well as *another person*, worship only an absolute God: if the saints, therefore, under the Old Testament, had not a mediator of a different nature, as well as another person distinct from Deity, they had only to do with an absolute God; nor could they come to God at all, nor worship him with acceptance; therefore I believe also that Christ in his human spirit pre-existed as the appointed head and mediator of the church before his incarnation: they then who believe that there is a mediator, a proper person distinct from JEHOVAH, and also of a different essence, or nature, who stands and mediates between God and men, as the man Christ Jesus is, and doth; they, I say, and they only, are the persons who do not worship an absolute God, whether they con-

ceive

ceive of him as subsisting in three persons, or in one only.

On the PERSON of CHRIST as MEDIATOR.

1. A MEDIATOR must be a third person, distinct from, and standing between, both the parties at variance, with whom he mediates, in order to reconcile and make peace betwixt them : but if Christ, as Mediator, be a divine person in the Godhead, would he not then mediate to himself ? for as the true God he is not distinct from the Father. To suppose, then, that Christ mediates, as he is God, in any sense whatever, seems to me a tenet of Sabellius, and is a manifest absurdity ; I conceive, therefore, that Christ in his whole person, as he is Mediator, must be properly *distinct* both from GOD, and from *sinful man*. Consequently, the Son of God, *even the man Christ Jesus*, who knew no sin, is the Mediator between God and men.

2. IF Christ be considered as a divine person in the Godhead, he *himself* is the *offended party*, as much as any other person in the divine nature : if, therefore, as such, he is Mediator, it seems necessarily to follow, either that as God he receives no satisfaction, or that the Godhead is absolutely perfect without his divine person. To suppose the former, destroys the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, and the foundation of every christian's hope ; to admit the latter, is to allow that absolute Deity doth not belong to Christ as a divine person ; therefore Christ as Mediator is *not God and man*, but *man only*, even the *man of God's*
right

right hand, that Son of man whom he hath made strong for himself, Psalm lxxx. 17.

3. THE Mediator could not be both God and man, as a person *distinct* from God the Father; for then there would be *two* gods, *one* united to the man Christ, and the *other* not; *one* manifested in flesh, and the *other* not: for if one infinite divine person, who is himself the living God, took flesh; and there is another infinite divine person, who is himself the living God, that did not take flesh; these certainly make *two* supreme gods: but the scripture knows of but one true God, even the Father; therefore Christ, as the Mediator, is man, and not God and man.

4. THE office of a Mediator is to do all in his power to make peace; and as he voluntarily undertook the office, it behoves him both to do and to suffer whatsoever was necessary to bring about a reconciliation; else he would not be able and faithful to discharge the trust reposed in him: now that which in this case was required of Christ, and necessary to be done for us, was to fulfil the divine law, and bear the curse of it; but JEHOVAH, as a divine person, could not do this, therefore it was the man Christ that did it; and thus it is written, *he made peace by the blood of his cross, who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification*, Eph. ii. 13—16. Rom. iv. 25. consequently Christ, as man, is the Mediator.

5. A MEDIATOR must also have access, and be nearly allied (at least in good will and affection) to both parties: as *Israel* of old, he must have power with God and with man; such a person was Christ, who, by being in the bosom of his Father before the world was, and *in union*
with

with God, and by coming down from heaven, and also taking our flesh ; he was nearly allied and had access to both parties : whose supreme love to God, and matchless love to men, moved him to undertake this glorious work of mediation between God and men, whereunto also he was chosen and appointed of the Father.

6. THERE was no necessity that Christ should have a *distinct* Godhead of his own, or be *another divine person* in JEHOVAH, *distinct* from the Father, in order that he might undertake and execute the office of a mediator ; for his business, as such, was only to obey and suffer, and intercede with God for his people, which he could only do as man ; therefore the Godhead of the Father, united to Christ's human nature, could and did support him as well, nay much better than any other can be supposed to do, that is not the Father's Godhead ; nor do we ever read of any other Godhead, or Deity, supporting Christ in the days of his flesh ; nor of his praying to any other for strength, but to the Father only.

7. THE righteousness of Christ, whereby all believers are justified, is *not the righteousness of the divine nature*, that dwelt personally in him ; but of his human nature, even of the man Christ Jesus ; for it is a righteousness *consisting in obedience to God, and that unto death* : but the Deity could have no other hand in this, but only in *appointing, commanding, and supporting* the person that did it : for though God and man are united in Christ, it was the man only that obeyed and died ; and therefore the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, is said to be by *one* (not *God-man*) but by *one man*, JESUS CHRIST,

Rom.

Rom. v. 15. and thus are we reconciled to God *by the death of his Son*, ver. 10.

8. THE scripture always speaks of the Mediator as *man*, never as *God-man*. I read of no such thing in all the bible : God and man were indeed united in Christ, as hath been before observed, but not as Mediator : but it was one *begotten* of God, his holy child JESUS, whom he sent into the world, which died and rose again ; that is, the Mediator between God and men : for it is written, " God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law," Gal. iv. 4. Can this be true of a divine person ? can JEHOVAH HIMSELF be *made under the law* ? Again, " God hath made him sin for us, who knew no sin," 2 Cor. v. 21. But could a divine person be made sin ? Again, " God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ," Acts ii. 36. Can these things be spoken of a divine person ? Certainly not. Again, another scripture saith, " Through *this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," Acts xiii. 38. And again, more expressly yet, the apostle declares, " That there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. ii. 5. Is it not then manifestly the plain sense, as well as the express words of scripture, that Christ, as man, is Mediator ? nor can any person, I think, deny this without corrupting and adding to the word of God.

BUT if it be admitted, that Christ only suffered in his human nature, and that God the Father was in him, and sustained him under his sufferings (which I think none who believe the scriptures will presume to deny) I ask, then,

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where

where is Christ's distinct Godhead spoken of ? or where is Christ said to be a divine person distinct from the Father ? and if not *distinct*, the *Trinitarian hypothesis* is certainly false. Besides, if it was Christ's peculiar work as a *divine* person, to work out redemption for his people ; certainly *one principal part of it was to support himself* : but we find that God the Father, who sent him, anointed him with his own divine Spirit, even with the Holy Ghost, and with power. The Father also was always with him, upholding and supporting him. And when he offered himself without spot to God, he did it through the eternal Spirit : and was not this the same HOLY SPIRIT, with which God the Father had anointed him ? I conclude then that the divine person, who was in Christ, gave him promises, anointed and supported him, to whom he also prayed, and in whom he trusted, was, and is, the Deity of Christ ; and as he himself continually calls this divine person his God and Father, it naturally and necessarily follows that the Godhead of the Father is the only Godhead of Christ ; and that God the Father is the only supreme object of divine worship ; and that his own and only begotten Son is the man Christ Jesus, who is the alone Mediator between God and men.

OBJECTION.

1. "*None but an infinite person can make satisfaction for sin committed against an infinite God.*"

ANSWER.

1. PROPER satisfaction for sin, committed against God, can only be made *by suffering the penalty of the law,*
which

which penalty is *death*: “The wages of sin is death,” Rom. vi. 23. “Without shedding of blood there is no remission,” Heb. ix. 22. But surely no man that thinks soberly can believe, or will affirm, that an *infinite* person, the living God, could *thus* make satisfaction for sin: yet this, I think, is the meaning of the objection, if it hath any meaning at all in it.

2. THE objection supposes that there are *two* infinite deities; for if one infinite person makes satisfaction to another infinite person, they must of necessity be *two infinite distinct beings*—one that makes satisfaction; and the other to whom the satisfaction is made, which, to assert, is absurd and impious; for God is ONE.

3. IF what this objection supposes be true, then no proper satisfaction can at all be made for the sins of men, because an infinite person cannot suffer.

4. IF, after all, the *objector's* words do not well express his meaning, but all that he means by it is—that the man Christ, who suffered for us, was *united* to an infinite person, then the objection is of no force at all: for we believe and maintain the very same. If any deny this divine person to be the Father, it lies upon them to prove that Christ was united to any other.

OBJECTION

2. “No being inferior to DEITY can merit any thing with God, because he owes all the obedience in his power to his Creator.”

A N S W E R.

THIS objection is much the same with the former ; and the plain meaning of it is, that none of the human race can be properly redeemed and saved ; for the merit of redemption must needs arise from the ransom paid : but I answer,

1. THAT Christ is not ranked in the class of creatures, because he was begotten before them all, and was in personal union with JEHOVAH, who made all things by him, and for him ; yet he is to be considered in his own nature and person inferior to God the Father, else he could not have died.

2. WHEN Christ was sent, and came to suffer for the sins of men, he was not *alone*, but the Father was with him ; therefore, in all his sufferings, he was supported and upheld by Deity itself.

3. WE no where read, that any person is by the divine law under an obligation to suffer for another's sin* ; rather God hath declared the contrary : " The Father shall not bear the iniquity of the Son, nor the Son bear the iniquity of the Father ; but the soul that sinneth shall die." It seems also contrary to the equity of divine government, and the moral perfections of God, to require

* THIS is not meant, nor is it applicable to the posterity of our common and first parent ADAM, for he was created and constituted a public person to represent and act for all his natural offspring, therefore his sin is considered as their sin ; " in whom all have sinned ;" and it is manifest, that all his children are affected by, and suffer for his personal transgression : hence infants are subject to sufferings and death, though they have not sinned after the similitude of ADAM's transgression, that is, in their own persons ; and hence the first ADAM was a type of Christ, the second, whom God hath " given to be a covenant of the people," Isa. xlii. 6.

an innocent person to suffer for the guilty; and to make the righteous as the wicked. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? *Milton* rightly supposes, that none of the holy angels were under an *obligation* to suffer for man's transgression†. It never was a part of their duty, which they owe to their Creator, to die for the sins of men; much less was God's only begotten Son under that obligation, without his own voluntary consent; wherefore he saith, "Lo, I come, yea, I delight to do thy will, O God." Thus he offered himself to be God's servant in the work of redemption, whereunto also he was called and appointed of the Father; but he was not by any law forced or compelled to it; consequently the blood of Christ, that holy one of God, did truly merit, and is the righteous and only meritorious cause of our redemption from sin and the wrath to come.

HERE we may notice the impropriety of that, as I conceive, unmeaning expression, viz. That Christ suffered as man, but merited as God. If Christ did not merit by suffering, then why did he suffer at all? Moreover, if Christ, *by suffering*, did not merit and obtain pardon for us, then he died in vain, and our faith in him is also vain: but if Christ, by his sufferings unto death for us, merited redemption for his people, as he certainly did; then he merited as man, and not as God; because, as God, he

† Which of ye will be mortal to redeem

Man's mortal crime? —

He ask'd, but all the heav'nly choir stood mute,

And silence was in heaven.

MILTON,

did

did not, nor could suffer. The blood of Christ was the price of our redemption : this was the ransom which God required ; and which Christ hath given unto God for us : he redeemed—he bought us with his blood ; consequently that which merited our deliverance must needs be included in, and arise from the intrinsic worth and value of the ransom paid ; therefore Christ, *as man*, paid the whole debt which we owe to divine justice, by suffering in our stead ; and thus it is written, “ By his stripes are we healed : ” but to say, that he did not merit as man, when he suffered only as man ; but that he merited as God, when as God he suffered nothing, is, in effect, to deny the efficacy of his atonement, and to rase the foundation of every christian’s hope : the redeemed saints in glory, plainly declare that the death of Christ was the *meritorious* cause of all their salvation ; hence addressing the Lamb, and falling prostrate before him, they cry, “ Thou art worthy to take the book, &c. for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood,” though they knew that he was in union with God, and supported by him ; yet they do not impute the *merit* of their redemption to the *impassible Deity*, but to the *suffering humanity*.

OBJECTION

3. “ Sin is an infinite evil, because the person against whom it is committed, is an infinite God.”

ANSWER.

A N S W E R.

1. THIS way of reasoning may seem plausible, but it is certainly false; for if this reasoning be admitted as just, then it follows that every action, even of a finite creature, when it respects God, who is an infinite being, must be an infinite act. When, therefore, the scripture saith, "Is not thy sin infinite?" it can only mean, that it is exceeding great, or as *Paul* speaks, *exceeding sinful*; beyond what the sinner himself can fully comprehend, or is able to atone for, by all that he can do, or give, or suffer: thus, that which is very great, we sometimes call infinite. All the saints love God; but will any one say that their love is *infinite*, because the object of it is so? Certainly not. But should any one taken upon him to assert, that man's sin is *in its own nature* infinite: then I dare affirm, that the atonement also of the man Christ Jesus, is *in its own nature* equally infinite; and this, I conceive, will be denied by none, who believe Christ, the last Adam, to be greater and better than his type, the first Adam.

2. HOWEVER great an evil the sins of men may be, because committed against God, the greatest and the best of beings (and we believe that no man can conceive how great his sins are) yet the obedience and oblation of Christ must needs be an equivalent for all the sins of his people; for he offered himself unto God for them: if then we estimate the evil of sin by the dignity of the person against whom it is committed, and from thence conclude it is an infinite evil; we may, on the contrary, estimate the merit

merit of Christ's offering by the dignity of the person to whom the offering was made, and from thence conclude that it also is of infinite merit: if otherwise, we make the first *Adam* greater than Christ the second, and his disobedience more powerful to condemn, than the righteousness of Christ was to justify and save, which is against all reason and revelation, see Rom. v. 14—21. If, therefore, the demerit of man's sin was infinite, because God was the object of it; certainly the merit of Christ's oblation, who offered himself without spot to God for us, was likewise infinite; because God was the object of that also. Set then the merit of Christ's atonement over against the demerit of man's sin; and if the latter be found infinite to inthrall and destroy, the former will be found as infinite to redeem and save, and much more abundantly; for the dignity of the person suffering exceedingly enhances his merit. Now Christ was before, and greater, and better, than all his church put together; he is the head whereof they are but the members; but the Head is above, and greater than all: therefore Christ, in his own person, was of more worth and value than all the millions of redeemed saints, for whom he bowed his sacred head, and gave up the Ghost: especially when we consider that this glorious person, the first-born of every creature, the image of God, was a Lamb of God's own providing; even that *Son of man* whom he sent into the world, and made strong for his ownself: and, without all dispute, that offering which God hath provided, and which God also hath accepted, was a full, sufficient, and perfect sacrifice and oblation for the sins of men: even the blood
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of bulls and goats, &c. which were offered under the law, had efficacy, by virtue of the divine appointment, to purify the flesh, and redeem from temporal death; how much more then shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge our sins, and deliver us from the wrath to come?

I HAVE been the more particular in considering these objections, because they have a shew of humility in them, are become popular, and are at first sight very plausible; whereas, in truth, they pour contempt upon the wisdom of God, degrade the person of Christ, deny the meritorious efficacy of his blood; and, in fine, have a tendency to destroy the gospel foundation of our hope. "But we preach CHRIST crucified, who, as such, is the end of the law for righteousness; and is also the wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

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purge our sins, and deliver us from the wrath to come?

I HAVE been the more particular in considering these objections, because they are the most commonly in use, and are the most dangerous, and are the most likely to become popular, and are the most likely to be received.

C H A P. XIII.

Wherein are offered some reasons, tending to prove, that the common doctrine of the Trinity is no article of the christian faith.

1. **I**T appears to me to be no article of our faith, because men who so conceive of it are often led to censure, and charge the sin of heresy upon their christian brethren, *merely* because, in that particular, they differ from them.

Now, as every tree is known by its fruit; so may every doctrine be known both as to its nature and importance, by the effects which it produceth on the hearts and tempers of such as hold it; therefore, either the doctrine itself, or the manner of some persons contending for it, is not according to truth; because the fruit of it is evil.

“Why dost thou judge thy brother, and why dost thou set at nought thy brother?” “He that loveth not his brother, knoweth not God; for God is love.”

2. IT appears not to be an essential, because, whatever may be pretended, it certainly respects the *manner* of the

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Deity's subsisting in his own divine nature; but God hath no where told us how he subsists in his own pure essence. The scripture never saith, that JEHOVAH exists in a plurality of persons, nor have we a divine warrant to call any distinctions in the Godhead *two*, or *three* persons: *God is one*. But were it really so, as some men suppose, yet as God hath not revealed it to us in his word, it is no article of the christian faith, much less an essential of our religion.

3. It appears not to be an essential, from the general practice of many *Protestant* ministers and divines who hold it; for they generally declare other points *alone* to be essential, leaving that out; and speak but very sparingly, if at all of the Trinity: likewise when they speak to persons in private about their souls, they, I believe, seldom or never mention the Trinity to them: but their enquiry chiefly respects the sincerity of their faith in Christ, together with the genuine fruits thereof, in a way of holiness and divine consolation: but as the doctrine of the Trinity is of all points most difficult, and less understood than any other; if it were an essential, they ought to take care, in the first place, that the sick and tempted rightly understood and believed it: now as this is generally neglected, it seems to imply, that they do not really suppose it to be an essential; and if from the pulpit they still insist upon it, lest perhaps they should be thought *heterodox* by some of their *wise* and *captious* hearers, then their conversation in private seems to contradict their preaching in public.

4. It is not essential, because humble christians and godly persons, when approaching the throne of grace,

do not take that doctrine into consideration in order to help, comfort, and establish their souls in the hope of eternal life : but their minds are rather fixed upon the riches of divine grace, the atoning blood and intercession of Christ, together with the sure and precious promises of God to his repenting and believing people. This, I doubt not, is true in experience : they consider not whether God exists in *three* persons, or in *one* : but in their sweetest and most holy frames of soul, they only look to one God the Father in one Mediator Christ Jesus, by whom they come to that one God, and pray for, and rejoice in, the divine light and comfort of his free Spirit.

5. It appears not to be an article of faith, because ministers, in every other doctrine confessedly essential, are at no loss to bring plain and express texts from the word of God ; they can readily produce some part of the sacred records in proof of what they assert ; saying, *Thus saith the Lord ; and thus it is written* ; which puts the matter out of all doubt that their testimony is true : but to prove their doctrine of the Trinity, they bring not one express text to confirm it : all that they pretend to, is, to cite a few texts, which *they* say have such a meaning in them ; but we ought not to receive their sense of such texts as *certainly* just and true : *first*, because they are capable of another meaning : *secondly*, because God himself in the plainer parts of his word hath no where revealed the doctrine which they would infer from those controverted texts : *thirdly*, because the sense they put upon them, is a direct contradiction to many plain and express parts of the

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the word of God. It is better, therefore, to put no meaning at all upon them, than such a sense as flatly contradicts the plain testimony of God. When Jesus (speaking to *Peter*) said of his apostle *John*, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" some of them drew such an inference from it, that a report was spread among the disciples, that the disciple *John* should not die; but *John* himself denies that Christ said any such thing, "for, saith he, Jesus said not, that he shall not die." What then? why he said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Thus he only repeats the bare words of Jesus, without putting any comment or determinate meaning on them; because the meaning of them was doubtful and obscure: and so should we do on all the more difficult and dark parts of scripture, lest by putting a sense upon them as our own reason dictates, we should be found to have added to the word of God, and to have led his people into error.

6. THE common doctrine of the Trinity is built upon the precarious bottom of doubtful inferences, and not upon the plain and express revelation of God; much in the same manner as the doctrine of the saints eternal union, and of justification *before faith*; which some great divines have held and asserted: but as *this* of justification from eternity, so the common doctrine of the Trinity hath, I conceive, nothing to support it but human conjecture, and inferences drawn by the wisdom of men: neither of them can produce one single text, that in *express* words, or by *necessary* consequence, declares and testifies that which they contend for: if they will still insist upon it, that

that although the doctrine be not expressly declared in the words of scripture, yet it is inferable by natural and just consequence; I answer, If men seek to build and establish a doctrine by human reasoning and argument, why may not one man's conjecture and reasoning be set against another's? and in that case how shall we know with whom the *truth* is found? with the *many*, or the *few*? the *wise*, or the *unwise*? But the judgment of God is according to truth, and in his word he hath told us, Therefore, not human reason, but divine revelation only can settle the articles of our faith, beyond all further dispute or contradiction. Besides, there is no other essential article of faith in all the bible, but is expressly declared to us again and again; It is therefore highly unreasonable to suppose that any fundamental doctrine is left to be inferred by the labored reasonings and inferences of man's wisdom; for if one essential is thus left to be inferred by human reasoning, why not all? and if one essential is by the wisdom and goodness of God plainly and explicitly declared; for the same reason we may conclude that the ever blessed God hath with equal plainness revealed to us every *necessary* article of faith. Our Lord's reasoning with the *Sadducees* on the resurrection, which some urge on this occasion, appears to me not applicable to the present case, for the *Sadducees* did not only deny the resurrection of the body, but they denied also the immortality of the soul: they said, there was neither angel, nor spirit: and our Lord's reasoning with them, seems designed chiefly to prove that the Spirit of *Abraham*, &c. had an existence in a separate state, and then by consequence he proves the resurrection

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of the body, as that which is a part of man, and essential to his being as a perfect or complete man; besides, the doctrine of the resurrection is expressly declared in other scriptures; but the same cannot be said of *three distinct persons in ONE GODHEAD*; but that truth which is plainly revealed in one part of scripture, may, by just inference, be deduced from other parts where the doctrine is but obscurely hinted at: and, *lastly*, the canon of scripture is now complete and perfected: therefore it is most reasonable to believe, that there is no article of our faith, but what is to be found in express words in some part or other of the sacred scriptures: but the doctrine of the Trinity, as commonly explained, is no where to be found therein; nor can this doctrine, any more than that of eternal justification, be held and maintained without opposing and contradicting many express texts and passages of the sacred word: and, as the latter hath been invented in order to silence the cavils of some of the *Arminians*; so hath that of the Trinity to stop the mouth of *Arius* and *Sabellius*, and their followers; but there was no need for either of these human inventions in order to effect that which they aimed at; rather they seem to have furnished them with stronger objections against the truth, and to have hardened them still the more in their error: consequently the remedy hath proved worse than the disease: for the doctrine of justification by grace, and of the Godhead of Christ, can be better proved and maintained without these human aids: and as the former notion of eternal justification confounds God's eternal purposes concerning his people, with his temporal acts towards them;

them; and even, in my opinion, subverts and destroys the doctrine of eternal predestination and election (for how can a man be predestinated to that which is itself eternal?) so the common Trinitarian doctrine confounds the persons of the Father and the Son, and leaves Christ no true Deity at all; they say indeed the contrary, but we have nothing but their bare word for it: for if they ascribe a distinct Godhead, or Deity to Christ (which they seem to do) that is not the Father's, it certainly is no where to be found, for divine revelation knows but of one, and that is always personally ascribed to the Father.

THEREFORE, the common doctrine of the Trinity is, I conceive, not only no article of our faith, but dangerous and hurtful in its consequences; in that it denies the man Christ Jesus to be properly united to the living God, and to have been supported and upheld by him. Will it be said, how then can a *Trinitarian* be a christian? I answer, *first*, because he doth not intend what his doctrine leads to, but is led into it merely by custom and mistake: *secondly*, because when he hath advanced this error, which he supposes to be right, he presently after denies it; and thus, by a subsequent assertion of the *unity* of God, he denies his former notion of a *triune* God: *thirdly*, because in his sermons, prayers, and thanksgivings, he most commonly speaks of, prays, and gives thanks unto the Father of Christ, as the only living and true God; so that when he sometimes seems to speak otherwise, it must be imputed to the prejudice of education and human infirmity: *fourthly*, because he heartily receives and rests alone upon the atonement of Christ; wherefore, in his heart

heart he believes that Christ, the Son of God, did truly suffer and lay down his life for us ; though at other times, when under the influence of some Trinitarian hypothesis, he seems to deny it : *fifthly*, because he evidences, by works of righteousness, the sincerity of his faith, and hope in Christ, which is the true and only test of a man's being a sincere christian.

7. IT is further clear, that the doctrine of the Trinity, as generally explained, is not explicitly revealed in the word, because of the many and opposite opinions of men about it : for how can we reconcile such a supposed *explicit* revelation with the different judgments and explanations which many great and good men have given us of that doctrine (see chap. 1.). Can that be *plainly revealed* which men of the greatest penetration and piety in the christian church cannot discover, so as to unite and be of one mind concerning it ?

THE different views and opposite *systems* of the *Nicene* fathers ; the *schoolmen*, or *modal* Trinitarians ; the *modern Athanasians* ; and, lastly, the *Hutchinsonians* ; are all of them so different one from the other, that not any two of them are agreed in the matter : nay, they are so far from agreeing therein, that the explanation, as given us by one party, doth, in my opinion, essentially affect the doctrine as explained by the other ; therefore they cannot all of them be right : consequently, if the doctrine, according to the view of either of the parties, be scripturally true and fundamental, then all the rest must be in a fatal error ; but it is allowed, that there have been, and still are, great and godly persons among them all : therefore, I conclude it

is not an essential, nor in truth any article of the christian faith.

8. It is not a fundamental, because every great and essential doctrine of the gospel may be certainly believed and held without it, which we hope hath been sufficiently proved already.

GOD and his Christ are equally, and, as I conceive, much more glorified upon the *Unitarian*, than the *Trinitarian* scheme.

ALL the great doctrines of grace, of Christ's atonement, of regeneration, &c. are clearly held and firmly maintained by us; we lay aside and reject nothing but contradiction and confusion.

THE believer also stands upon the surest foundation of gospel hope in Christ Jesus; hath free access to a throne of grace through his name; and receives all needful and promised supplies of the Spirit, both for consolation, establishment, and fruitfulness in every good work: Ought not then forbearance and christian charity to be exercised towards all saints, with regard to their various and different opinions about the explanation of the Trinity, as well as any other controverted point of doctrine; wherein a person may hold either side, and yet possess and be influenced by a living faith in the Son of God? I will not say, that even the doctrine of divine sovereignty, though plainly revealed, is an essential article of faith; yea, I am persuaded that many, who do not understand and heartily believe it, may nevertheless be born of the Spirit, believe on Christ, and have their fruit unto holiness, and so be eternally saved: yet I firmly believe, that
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the doctrine of sovereign grace and eternal election is expressly revealed and taught in scripture, and is the prime cause and eternal spring of our salvation; though at present it be hid from some of God's people: but they will know it hereafter.

How much more then may we suppose a true christian to be ignorant of the doctrine of the Trinity, as commonly taught among us, which is no where expressly revealed in scripture? The apostle testifies, that, "in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, *but faith which worketh by love,*" Gal. v. 6. Besides, every thing revealed in the word, though divinely true, is not therefore an *essential*; but all things necessary to salvation, as faith in Christ, love to the saints, following after peace with all men and holiness, are plainly written, that he may run that readeth them.

THUS every capital article of our faith, the way-faring-man, though a fool, may clearly understand, and shall not err therein. The evil, therefore, lies not in any essential difference that there is in the faith of the *Unitarians* and *Trinitarians* about the Trinity; but in their laying such a stress on their different explanations of it, as to judge, censure, and exclude each other from the churches of Christ, merely on account of that difference. And I am firmly persuaded, that such a conduct is not warranted by scripture, nor acceptable to God, nor profitable to the saints; but is quite the reverse in all, and every one of them.

GRACE be with all them that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity.—To them that would not stumble their weak

brethren, nor hinder the gospel of Christ, permit me to hint the following word of advice :

1. **RECEIVE** no doctrine as divine on the bare word or authority of man ; let not his reputation for learning or piety command your faith ; nor his positive and magisterial manner of speaking, awe you into a belief of it : if he brings no plain and express scripture to prove his assertions, let them pass as the private conceits and *dogmas* of the preacher. It is not the word of man, but the word of God, that hath a right to demand our implicit faith and obedience.

2. **NEITHER** add to, nor diminish from the word of God ; but receive what is revealed in scripture, as the truth and mind of God, and therewith rest satisfied : begin where God begins ; and end where God ends ; for nothing is the ground and object of faith but the divine word and the truths therein revealed : of this also be firmly persuaded, that no doctrine or opinion will afford any real support or comfort to your souls in a *trying* hour ; but what God himself hath expressly declared and testified.

3. **BEWARE** of encouraging that zeal which excites jealousies, hard thoughts, and slanderous speeches of those that may differ from you : let it suffice, that they hold the head Christ, and depart from iniquity, even as you. Judge not, that ye be not judged. Take heed that you do not condemn the guiltless, as the *Pharisees* did of old ; for if they are too weak to plead their own cause, Christ will plead it for them : If therefore they professedly believe and depend on Christ alone for pardon and life

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through his name; if they are visibly walking in the ways of God's commandments, fearing to offend, and studying to please him in all things; receive them as christian brethren, and reject them not, on any pretence whatever. A state of grace is consistent with many mistakes, a confused judgment, and great infirmity: God delights in mercy, and knows how to have compassion, and so should we: "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children."

4. AVOID those who are of a contentious and wrangling spirit: "make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go, lest thou learn his ways and get a snare to thy soul," Prov. xxii. 24, 25. Captious and censorious professors (however wise in their own conceits) are troublesome and mischievous in all societies, and in all company wherever they come: they offend both *Jew* and *Gentile*, and the church of God: they will make and widen breaches, but never heal them: Mark them, therefore, that cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine (of Christ) which ye have learned, and avoid them, Rom. xvi. 17.

5. STUDY to imitate Christ in his gentleness, meekness and compassion to the weak in faith, the feeble minded, and the tempted: Judge not their doubtful thoughts, nor seek, by ensnaring questions, to perplex and trouble them; God is love: though they differ from you about lesser points confessedly, not essential, or about the *mere mode* of explaining any doctrine that is essential, yet contend not with them. If the doctrine itself, as to the end proposed by it, is believed and held by them, reject them not; for
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God hath received them. Thus, as to the mode and subject of baptism, and the essential doctrine of justification by Christ, which some suppose to be eternal before faith, but others (I think more scripturally) in time, *by faith* : and so with regard to the Trinity, persons may conceive and explain it differently, and yet in the main be sound in the faith, and in a state of grace. Therefore the meekness of wisdom and love of the Spirit ; will lead and enable us to judge charitably of, and receive, and love as christian brethren, those that may in these and other similar points differ from us : for there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

C H A P. XIV.

Summary view of the scheme proposed.

I. **W**E believe that the only living and true God, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, is an infinite Spirit; the greatest, the wisest, and the best of beings; and as in being, so in person he is but one: God is one. To us there is but one God the Father; whose eternal Spirit is essential to his being, and is not another person, nor of another nature different from himself; but in both respects is one and the same: for whatever the Spirit doth, that God doth; and wherever the Spirit is, there God is: for God, by his Spirit, performs all things, according to his own will; whose Spirit seems to be the powers of life essential to the divine Being, whereby he is able to do all things, is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent, filling heaven and earth with his presence, power, and glory: "Whither can I go from thy presence, or whither can I flee from thy Spirit?" They therefore who deny the Holy Ghost to be properly the Spirit of God,

God, and essential to his being; seem to me to deny him to be JEHOVAH, the living and true God, who hath the powers of life and being, in his own essence and Godhead.

BUT if we understand by the Holy Ghost, that divine Spirit which is essential to God the Father; then those many scriptures, which speak of God as giving and working by his own Spirit, are proper expressions, easy to be understood, and agreeable to our ideas of the spirit of a person: for the spirit of a person is the essential life and power of that person, and is always understood as included in him.

2. THE ever blessed God, according to his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself, hath manifested the divine perfections and glories of his invisible Godhead in his works of creation, providence, and redemption; the beginning of whose way was Christ; for he is the first-born, the most perfect, and express image of the invisible God. "JEHOVAH, saith he, possessed me, the beginning of his way, before his works of old:" and again, Christ calls himself, "The beginning of the creation of God." And as it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, God filled him with his own divine Spirit, gave him to have life in himself, and created all things by him, both visible and invisible.

BY his Son, God spake the worlds into being: hence he is called the word of God. By the word of JEHOVAH were the heavens made; he commanded, and they were created. By the word of God the heavens were of old;

old: Thus God created all things by Jesus Christ, Eph. iii. for without him was nothing made that was made: and as God created all things by Christ, so he made all things for him; whom also he hath appointed heir of all things, being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they: He stands also distinguished from all creation, as the first-born of every creature; and the only begotten of the Father, who dwelleth in him, is personally united to him, and doth all things by him. At the same time as he is the begotten Son, and image of God, he stands distinguished from God the Father also: therefore Christ is a *middle person* between God and all creation (and as such was a proper person to be a Mediator between God and men) in and by whom alone God hath manifested himself in all his ways and works, both to angels and men. To him God the Father spake when he said, "Let us make man in our image:" "When he prepared the heavens," saith Christ, I was there: when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him," Prov. viii. 27—30.

Now when man had fallen, God the Father promised to send this person, even his own Son, to redeem and save mankind from sin and Satan; that the same person by whom man was created, by the same also he might be redeemed. His advent, future incarnation, sufferings, and death for the sins of men, were likewise by divine appointment, shadowed forth, and typified by a variety of slain beasts, &c. him also God sent as his angel to guide and protect his people all the days of old; and as God

the Father dwelt in him, he was ever with him, and spake by him : hence Christ, as the angel of JEHOVAH, is sometimes distinguished from him, and sometimes not ; because JEHOVAH himself spake in him : he often appeared to *Abraham* : *Jacob* wrestled with him as a man ; but God was in him ; therefore *Jacob* said, " I have seen God face to face, though no man hath seen God at any time ; but he that seeth the Son, seeth the Father also." Again, *Jacob* speaks of each distinctly by himself, when he calls the Father, " The God that fed him all his life long," and calls the Son, " The angel that redeemed him from all evil." After this manner the apostles commonly speak, saying, God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour. He appeared to *Moses* in the bush, as the angel of JEHOVAH, who spake in him ; by whose hands also God sent *Moses* to deliver and bring the people out of *Egypt*. This is that angel which JEHOVAH sent before his people in the wilderness ; for he said to *Moses*, " Behold, I send an angel before thee to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared ;" he adds, " Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name," i. e. my authority and Godhead is in him. Thus by the same person that God brought his people out of *Egypt* ; by the same also he led and kept them in the wilderness, and brought them into the promised land. Now it was necessary, both for the comfort and safety of God's church, that he should thus manifest himself to his people of old ; for had JEHOVAH appeared without the person of the Mediator he would have been an absolute God, a
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consuming fire : and had the Mediator appeared alone without JEHOVAH, he would have had no authority or power to have redeemed and protected his servants ; therefore this complex person, God-man, that is, God in Christ, the Father and the Son, was ever the object of his people's faith, confidence, and joy : therefore to see Christ, and to believe in Christ ; is to see, and believe in God also, who dwelleth in him, and by union is one with him : and for the same reason to reject and to tempt Christ, is the same as to tempt and reject God.

BUT in the fulness of time this same person, the glorious Son of God, was sent into the world to redeem the world ; and as before he existed with God the Father as a pure spirit, he was now to be cloathed with flesh, " for it hehoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren ;" he had a Spirit like them before, but not a body of flesh : and because it was necessary that he should suffer in the flesh for us, God for this purpose prepared him a body in the womb of the virgin *Mary*, by the immediate power of his own Almighty Spirit ; and thus he was made of the seed of *David*, according to the flesh. Now the Son of God, who before was above the angels, was made a little lower than angels ; therefore in this inferior state of poverty and weakness he was again and again supplied with food, and supported by the ministration of angels : " Angels ministered unto him—an angel from heaven strengthened him." In this state of humiliation the Son of God, being made under the law for men, was obedient unto the Father, and gave his life a ransom for many ; " though he were the Son, yet learned he

obedience by the things which he suffered." And as JEHOVAH, God the Father, was in him, and with him in all his appearances to the church of old, before his incarnation ; so was he ever in him, and with him, when joined to a human body, and made flesh, he tabernacled among us ; for our God is an infinite being, he fills heaven and earth. But when Christ had finished the work which the Father had given him to do, and had made peace between God and men by the blood of his cross ; God the Father raised him again from the dead ; and as he was the first born of all creation, so is he the first-born from the dead ; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence : for as God created all things by him, as the first-born of every creature ; so, as the first-born from the dead, God will raise the dead by him also.

Now when God had raised him from the dead, he exalted him with his own right hand to be a prince and a Saviour, and gave him a name which is above every name : he before was the head of all creation, as the first-born of every creature ; but now he is made Lord both of the dead and of the living : " for to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living," Rom. xiv. 9. The Father also hath given him to be head over all things to the church, for whose sake all power is given to him both in heaven and earth. Therefore also God hath commanded, that every knee should bow to him as his chosen one, as the great high priest over the house of God, as the Lamb that was slain, and as God's King in Zion, whom he hath set upon his throne. It is this same person of the Son of God in
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whom dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, and in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell, both for creation and redemption: I say it is this same person, even the man Christ Jesus, begotten before all worlds, that actually came down from heaven, suffered in the flesh, died and rose again, whom God also hath ordained to be the judge of quick and dead; and by whom God will judge the world in righteousness at that day; for as God created all things by him, so he redeemed the world by him, and will also judge both men and angels by Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, angels, principalities, and powers being made subject unto him. Thus *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.*

Now when all things shall be subdued unto him, for he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet, he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father: and then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

AND whereas Christ was before all things in the bosom of his Father, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person; God did, in a *proper sense*, give his only begotten Son, and manifested his great love to sinners of the human race, in that for their sakes he parted with his own Son; he even delivered him to be insulted, tormented, and put to death by the malice and cruelty of men and devils. But what is still more amazing, God the Father himself pierced, with his own sword, the Son of his love, even his obedient Son. *Isaac* his type found a substitute,

substitute, and was spared, but Christ was not. "God spared not his own Son." And although the only begotten Son of God was inconceivably rich in the glory which he had with the Father before the world was; yet out of love to the Father to do his will, that he might be glorified; and out of love to fallen creatures whom God had chosen in him, and given to him to be redeemed by him; he willingly came down from heaven, left the riches of his glory, and became poor: his holy soul was even united to a human body of a span long, and as it were shut up and imprisoned therein: by degrees he was taught and increased in wisdom and understanding, as well as in stature: but what unknown sorrows and torments did he suffer before he was nailed to the cross, and there cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and though he knew all this before he came from heaven, yet he freely came to do his Father's will, and die for his chosen people, whom the Father had given him.

THUS Christ hath fulfilled the utmost extent of the divine law, wherein he shewed his love to God and to men, according to all the lengths and breadths of it: "I have seen, saith *David*, an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad:" but Christ the true *David* measured and fulfilled every jot and tittle of it. How real, how amazing was the love of Christ to his people! The same divine law which *Adam* broke, Christ hath fulfilled in his holy life and death: and had not Christ, the *second Adam*, kept and fulfilled the law, as well as suffered the penalty due to transgressors, the law of God would never have been fulfilled at all; consequently
could

could not have been magnified, and made honorable. Thus hath Christ loved the church, and given himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. Christ, as a head, is suited to his members; for he is above all, and greater than all: therefore his obedience and sufferings are more than all theirs ever could have been, if summed up all together. Christ is one common head of holy influence, life, and glory, to the whole church; and God, who is above all, and in all, and through all, is the fulness both of the church and of Christ too: for as Christ is the head of the church, so the head of Christ is God.

How mysterious, how wonderful, how transcendently great and glorious is the love of God, in giving his Son; and the love of Christ, his Son, in giving himself to die for our sins! In this was manifested the love of God towards us, in that God sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins; and in this was manifested the love of Christ towards us, in that he freely gave himself, and laid down his life for us.

“THANKS be to God for his unspeakable gift: and unto the Lamb that was slain, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father: To him be glory for ever.” Amen.

CONCLUSION.

AFTER all, we do not pretend to infallibility any more than our brethren who differ from us; it is therefore nothing strange if we should in some things be mistaken, and now and then express ourselves with impropriety.

WE may likewise in some places be inconsistent, at least appear so to be: but as we do not charge our brethren that oppose us with heresy on that account, we think it too severe and unchristian that they should charge us with it; for we trust, through grace, that we have obtained mercy to be faithful, and are accepted in Christ, even as they. Though we do not admit of the Holy Spirit's distinct personality; yet, as we believe his divine nature and Deity, and the necessity of having our souls regenerated, and purified by his divine power, as fully as they themselves can do; certainly there is no essential difference in our faith touching the Holy Spirit, both as to the glory that is given to him, and as to the benefit which, through grace, we receive from him: for they who believe him to be the essential Spirit of God,

by

by whom we are quickened, united to Christ, and sanctified; do to all intents and purposes glorify him as much, as others that suppose him to be a distinct person in the essence: but for our part we cannot conceive of a distinct personality without a distinct Godhead, and that I suppose our opponents themselves will hardly admit of.

FURTHER, if in their apprehension we do not well maintain Christ's divinity, yet as we believe and affirm that we do, why ought not our declaration to be admitted by them, as well as theirs by us, when they affirm and believe that they hold the unity of the Godhead, though in our apprehension they do not? Should we not then bear with one another's different apprehensions in so great a mystery, and exercise that christian charity, love, and gentleness which distinguishes Christ's disciples from all the people that are upon the earth; especially as we *confessedly* agree in the unity of God, and of the Mediator, his Son Jesus Christ; and also in the way of salvation by grace through faith in Christ crucified; by the quickening and renewing power of the Holy Spirit?

WHEN we come to God, do we not all unite in seeking, and coming to him as unto one God, by his Son Jesus Christ? and do we not pray unto one God the Father for the gift of his Holy Spirit to renew, lead, comfort, and establish our souls in the knowledge and faith of Christ? and do we not, under the gracious influences of the divine Spirit, give thanks unto God even the Father, for all things, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ? Now they who do this, evidencing by works of righteousness, the sincerity of their faith, are, I doubt not, the children

of God, and accepted with him ; and, as such, I can heartily unite with, and embrace them in the love of the Spirit, whether in opinion they be *Unitarians* or *Trinitarians*.

I HOPE I shall never insist upon any one's thinking and speaking just as I myself do, either as to sentiment or mode of expression, provided he holds Christ to be the only Mediator and way to God, comes to God by him, hath no other hope or dependence, save Christ alone and his righteousness ; and, walking in the fear of God, departs from all iniquity.

I SHALL endeavor likewise, through grace, never to draw a consequence from any one's words, and charge that consequence upon him, which he himself doth not see and allow.

Is any man in this life exempt from human infirmity, and mistake ? Certainly not. The most learned, the most enlightened, and exemplary christian, cannot say, I am perfect in knowledge. If we have fled to Jesus for refuge, and worship God in Christ ; if we are led by the Spirit of God, and walk after his commandments in righteousness and true holiness ; what surer proof, what better evidence can we give, that we are the children of God, and followers of the Lamb ? Such therefore should agree to differ in all other matters, wherein at present they cannot see exactly alike ; for the end of the commandment is love.

LET us not then judge one another any more, nor separate ourselves, nor exclude others from christian societies

societies and gospel churches, because we do not understand all mysteries alike, and are not yet made perfect in knowledge; "but whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." As one reason why God leaves many to be poor in this world, may be to try the hearts of the rich and opulent; so he may have given greater degrees of knowledge and understanding to some of his people, in order to try their charity and forbearance towards their weaker brethren: but every the feeble members of the body are necessary; the eye cannot say to the hand, nor the head to the feet, I have no need of you. As all saints unite in Christ by faith, and in God by him; so in heart they all unite in love, and are edified by one and the same Spirit.

PERHAPS there are not two christians upon earth that perfectly conceive and think alike in all things; no, not even in the doctrine of the Trinity. Have we not reason to believe that many who go under the name of being Trinitarians, do not at all understand (though they may pretend to believe) the doctrine? Were they examined on the point, would not many of them appear to be either *Arians*, or *Sabellians*, or *Tritheists*? If they conceive of the distinction of persons to be *real*; most of them, I am inclined to think, are either *Arians*, or *Tritheists*? If *modal*; their ideas coincide with the views of *Sabellius*: yet many of this sort are, I doubt not, admitted both by the *Athanasians* and *Hutchinsonians* to the same communion with themselves: And why? Because perhaps they are

never examined touching their real sentiments on that matter; or they, it may be, content themselves with being totally ignorant of what their teachers say about it; looking upon the doctrine of the Trinity as a hidden mystery, which even their teachers cannot explain, and which they (the hearers) cannot understand; and therefore they think it no way necessary to the peace or safety of their souls: Should any minister doubt, if this be the case, or not, with *most* of his hearers and communicants, let him make the experiment:—but love bears with many infirmities, and will not lay a greater burden upon his weak brother than he is able to bear: he that is weak in faith, may be weak in knowledge: the servant of Christ therefore will deal gently with such, as he ought, even as a nurse cherisheth her children. Are they born of God? do they come to him by Christ, and depart from all iniquity? These things, saith the minister of Christ, are a stronger proof of his being a sound convert, and a child of God; then his ignorance, or mistake in the mystery of the Trinity can possibly be to prove the contrary: he perhaps might add, “Even we ourselves that are teachers, are not agreed, if at all settled in our faith touching that matter: we think we are right, but it is possible that we may be wrong. Who can draw the line, or with certainty point out the difference betwixt *three distinct divine persons* in one essence, and *three distinct gods*? Yet if we hold the former, we are obliged to deny the latter.”

I HAVE said already, that I dare not, that I will not charge any man with a consequence, though it appear to me

me to follow from his principles, if he himself disown it. I have indeed spoken with all freedom, and have expressed myself with all the clearness in my power, concerning my own and others sentiments of the doctrine of the Trinity; and have also pointed out the tendency and consequences that seem to me to follow on both sides; and although the contrary system appears to me to be full of inconsistencies and tending to dangerous consequences, yet I cannot see any the least contradiction that can fairly be charged on our scheme; or that it so much as affects any capital article of the christian faith. The unity of the Godhead is evidently preserved; Christ's union with JEHOVAH, and consequently his Deity, is in the most ample manner declared and maintained; nor can it, I think, be doubted, nor will it be denied by any, that doth not make him ANOTHER GOD, either *supreme*, or *subordinate*, in distinction from the Father.

THE atonement of Christ also, in all its extent and efficacy, is equally held, believed, and asserted; and that as we conceive much better, and to far greater advantage than it is possible for the *Trinitarian hypothesis* to do, both with respect to its intrinsic worth, real merit, and glorious sufficiency; and, lastly, the divine nature and work of the Holy Spirit, in all its variety, power, and glory, is held and secured. And I think I might venture to challenge any man to prove the contrary; or to shew that the believer can have a more sure ground of hope, or a richer fund of divine consolation, on the *common* Trinitarian scheme, than on ours. But I am well satisfied with the foundation and reason of my hope in Christ, and am not desirous of enter-

entering into the labyrinths of controversy ; nor would I strive with any man, except it be who shall best serve his generation, and live most to the glory of God and of Christ.

I AM content to be ignorant of many things in the church below, though I hope it is my constant study and earnest prayer, to increase in the knowledge of God, and of his will, to do it.

How happy would it be for the church militant, if in a proper way and manner they knew how to bear and forbear with one another ! How happy if their zeal were guided by love, and according to knowledge ! they would then dwell together in unity, as brethren of the same family ; and as members of the same body, would mutually care for each other, without biting and devouring one another : then nothing but pure, disinterested love, would influence every member in the whole mystical body of Christ : And why should *Ephraim* envy *Judah*, or *Judah* vex *Ephraim* ? Let the envy of *Ephraim* depart, and the oppression of *Judah* cease ; and then the divided church will be united. God hath placed the members in the body as it hath pleased him, and hath assigned to each its proper work and station ; and hath severally bestowed on them such measures of gifts and graces suited to the work which he hath appointed for them : When this is attended to, and duly discharged, the church is edified in love, and God and his Christ is glorified.

FAITH and love, which is in Christ Jesus, is the substance of gospel doctrine. By faith we know and trust in Christ, and in God the Father, by him : by love we do
his

his will, and walk after his commandments. Thus the true christian glorifies God, and is profitable unto men.

Now if any man love God, the same is known of him; but he that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love: and therefore also, he that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him: let who will stumble at him, the fault is not in him, but in themselves; but who so hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth."

BUT if, after all, this exhortation to christian love and forbearance is by some construed as if it were only calculated to divert the mind of the reader from attending to the truth, and designed to cover or palliate some corrupt tenet or doctrine; I shall only add with the apostle, "This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world;" therefore "judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart, and then shall every man have praise of God." To whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

ERRATA.

- Page 28. l. 24. read *whatsoever* for *whatsoever*.
 30. l. 2. read *comprehended* for *comprehend*.
 33. l. 17. read *παρῆς* for *παρῆς*.
 34. l. 26. read *for* instead of *to be*.
 42. l. 15. after *as* add *a*.
 44. l. 7. read *intimate* for *infinite*.
 46. l. 16. read *speaks* for *speaks*.
 56. l. 18. read Cor. xi. for Cor. ii.
 61. l. 16. place the colon after *also*.
 63. l. 1. read *therefore* for *also*.
 79. l. 17. dele *of*.
 98. l. *last*. read *godliness* for *godliness*.
 111. l. 24. read 14—19. for 19—14.
 154. l. 10. read יְהוָה for יְהוָה.
 159. l. 18. read *world* for *world*.
 175. l. 2. read *παρῆς* for *παρῆς*.
 176. l. 20. read Job xl. 15. for Job xiv. 16.
 229. l. 27. read 1 Cor. xv. for 1 Cor. v.
 240. l. 27. read 2 Sam. ii. 3. for 2 Sam. 23.
 206. l. 2. read Rom. viii. 29. for Rom. viii. 2.
 319. l. 13. read *take* for *taken*.

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